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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

THE THEME OF CREATIVITY IN THE NOVELS OF JOYCE KARY

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES
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by

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ABSTRACT

First, Cary's experiences in Africa are related to his ideas about art. In Africa Cary was able to view government in action both as a representative of authority and as a private individual. In the conflict between the rulers and the ruled, Cary recognized the maker, the free man, creating his own world about him with all the pain and delight of artistic effort.

In his novels, Cary explores the consequences of the free, creative imagination at work in the world. The principal fact of life is the free mind which works for both good and evil: "This produces the very queer world we live in, a world in continuous creation and therefore continuous change and insecurity. A perpetually new and lively world, but a dangerous one, full of tragedy and injustice. A world in everlasting conflict between the new idea and the old allegiances, new arts and new inventions against the old establishment."

Cary's relation to the world as it seemed to him is examined, and then certain representative novels are studied in the light of his primary intuition that the creative imagination renews man's awareness of the realities of life.

Cary is shown to be modern in his preoccupation with the minds and emotions of his central characters. In the First Trilogy Cary's means of revealing the conscious and unconscious worlds of his characters by his presentation of

their intellects at the level of articulation is examined in terms of the creative imagination which is present in conservative, creative, and unchanging casts of mind.

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CHAPTER I CARY: EXPERIENCE AND IDEAS

(i) Biographical Sketch

Joyce Cary was born in Londonderry on December 7, 1888, but until 1897, when his mother died, he lived chiefly in London, though with frequent visits to relations in Ireland. However, after his mother's death, the family centre became Gunnersbury, near London, where the Tristram Carys--his uncle and aunt--lived. Although he still spent summer holidays in Ireland, Joyce Cary now came to regard England as home. He was educated first at Hurstleigh in Tunbridge Wells and then at Clifton College. While at Clifton, he began to reveal his creative talents in The Cliftonian. However, at seventeen, he left Clifton, intending to become a painter, and after staying in Paris for some months attended the Art School at the University of Edinburgh for three years. Eventually, dissatisfied with his painting, he went up to Trinity College, Oxford. Andrew Wright tells us that "At Oxford he read Kant and Blake, but Blake especially, who, he [Cary] writes in an unpublished essay, 'introduced me into a highly complex universe where what is called the material is entirely dissolved into imaginative construction and states of feeling, where matter, mind and emotion, become simply different

aspects of one reality."¹

From Oxford Cary went to Paris for a brief period, resolved on being a writer. He then returned to Oxford, only to leave again for the Balkan War of 1912-13. His experiences in this campaign are recorded in the recently published Memoir of the Bobotes.² Having returned, wounded, from the Balkan War, he was, for a short time, a member of Sir Horace Plunkett's Co-operative Society in Ireland. However he soon resigned from this position (the organization wanted agricultural experts) and joined the Nigerian service: "I wanted to see primitive Africa and I was attracted, as to the Irish job, by the chance of what seemed to me important and valuable constructive political work."³

(ii) Cary in Africa

Miss M. M. Mahood, in her article "Joyce Cary in Africa," has provided those interested in Cary with a greater insight both into his novels and into Cary's development as a writer. She says:

There is much more than the raw material for the events and situations of his early novels to be found in the official records which Joyce Cary kept in Borgu and in

his daily letters to his wife from Nigeria. The real interest of these papers is that they reveal a process of inner exploration during which Cary experienced, though he could not yet distinguish, the sens as well as the matière of his future novels: a sens which is the constantly varied recurrent theme of his two trilogies, and which might be defined as the theme of tribal loyalty and creative freedom.⁴

From these papers Miss Mahood traces Cary's progress in understanding Africa and is able to relate stages in his development with certain characters who appear in the early novels. When, at the early age of 29 and on a salary of £300 a year, Cary took over the district of Borgu, an area of 12,000 square miles, he hated it. This was largely due to a new experience--that of isolation in responsibility--and because the area, which had been without an officer for some years, was just recovering from a revolt:

...Joyce Cary's 1917 letters from Borgu are full of expostulations against the whole Negro race which read like the views of the bigoted racist, Rackham, in The African Witch. The setting of that novel is primarily Nafada, Cary's first station, and when he moved from there to Borgu he was still the newcomer anxious to conform with the ideas of the more experienced Europeans in the country and very ready to accept the easy generalisations with which many of them dismissed 'these people', the Nigerians. Cary in Nefada carefully (and a bit pompously) explains to his wife the importance of maintaining 'white prestige'.⁵

Fortunately, by the end of 1919, he was transformed into the type of the road-building Rudbeck of Mister Johnson. As he explained many years later "a man in real responsibility for other people's lives and happiness has no scruples about

dignity." However, in the interval Cary had the characteristics of another of his characters. He writes:

I have made more acquaintances today than for a long time past, and with a great deal of pleasure. I find lonely men in lonely huts working hard all the year to support one old blind father and a child--or chiefs in old age still cheerful and undaunted with nobody left in their tumbledown hamlet but a leper or so, and one household... They respect and care for the old, they feed the sick and the poor--there are no cases here of people starved to death--they pet and spoil their children. What would be wrong with us, is wrong with them. It is true that many things which are wrong to us are not wrong to them, but it is a question whether they are essentials.⁶

Miss Mahood explains:

At this time Joyce Cary was in fact beginning to fall into the state of mind of many public-school Englishmen in a colonial situation: a determination to preserve and even to isolate the culture of the people ruled because that culture, however repugnant and strange at first, awakens by the force of its tribal sanctions a strong response in the administrator's own conservative nature. When Cary in his letters from Nigeria complains bitterly of the education offered to pagans by American missionaries, his voice is that of Monkey Bewsher, the eccentric and conservative DO in An American Visitor.⁷

But Cary also outgrew his determination to keep his area uncontaminated by European influence. "When, 25 years later, he complained that Northern Nigeria was just a reserve, and contrasted the brash vitality of Lagos--'real individual freedom, getting its head loose and throwing out its front legs'--he was recording a discovery that he made in the closing months of his African Service."⁸

However, of greatest interest for this study is the evolution of Cary's concept of the creative imagination while he was in Africa. The concept began with the realisation of the remarkable liberty of action which his position of isolated responsibility gave him. While in the Rudbeck stage of his development, he began to change the face of the tract of land which was his area. Almost at once his creative energy encountered obstacles. Few of the Borgawa had the "extra-tribal" vision to encompass his aim. Also, he found equally stubborn opposition to his plans from his superiors at Kaduna, who had to carry out the policy of a parsimonious home government. The point was well taken: a man of vision, of creative imagination, is bound to meet with opposition from those in authority. However, Cary was able to view this principle from both points of view when those whose vision extended beyond the kraal brought them into conflict with authority--represented by A. J. Cary, ADO. Miss Mahood remarks:

In his work as magistrate, Cary felt all the attraction that the drunk and disorderly have for the sober and responsible. In the man who ran foul of the law Cary first began in Africa to recognise the maker, and free soul creating its own world with all the pain and delight of artistic effort. And he was to make this the main theme of all his novels.⁹

In 1920 Cary was invalided out of the African Service, and he and his wife, each having a small private income, settled in Oxford. Another ten years were needed to define his discoveries and then he was ready to write, as he called

it, the Comedy of Freedom.

(iii) Cary and Creativity

Joyce Cary's treatise, Power in Men, begins:

1. The weakest child has power and will. Its acts are its own. It can be commanded, but it need not obey. It originates each least movement. It is an independent source of energy which grows with its life and ends only with its death.

This power is creative. In man it has created all the machines, all the states, the wealth, arts, and civilization in the world.

A man's power is different in kind from state power. A nation is more than living men, but without living men it would not exist. Men existed before nations. The power in the man is real, but the power of a nation is derived. It is the creation of men.

2. This creative power is free. It can be encouraged, strengthened, and directed, but it cannot be treated like mechanical power. A machine cannot refuse to do exactly what is expected of it, but even slaves will not work if they do not choose. If they cannot murder their masters or escape, their last act of independence is to die.¹⁰

Because each man is unique, and likewise his creative power, in his attempts to produce a world about him suitable to his own feelings he is likely to clash both with his fellow individuals and society. As a consequence, Cary's major theme is the creative imagination of the individual in conflict with authority or the created worlds of others.

He continues:

Liberty is creation in the act. It is therefore eternal and indestructible. Whether man recognizes it for what it is or calls it what it is not, it is always at work. The contempt and abuse of its enemies can no more destroy it than they can dissolve being itself. It is and remains. But a false idea of its nature can hinder its action, as a bad map can do more to delay explorers than none at all.¹¹

It is apparent, then, that in Cary's view each individual is, broadly speaking, a creative artist whose shaping power is fundamental to him as an individual because with it he creates his own world. The distinction is essentially between art and fine art; as a fine artist, this is Cary's basic idea of life.

In the Clark Lectures of 1956, Joyce Cary said that "...all great artists have a theme, an idea of life profoundly felt and founded in some personal and compelling experience. This theme then finds confirmation and development in new intuition. The development of the great writer is the development of his theme--the theme is part of him and has become the cast of his mind and character."¹² Granted that the statement is true, that "all great artists have a theme, an idea of life," it is profitable to examine Cary's own novels and come to some conclusion about his intuition of life and, if possible, his stature as a novelist.

This, then, is an attempt to examine Cary's relation with the world as it seemed to him, and to see what he did with it, that is to say, on the one side with what may be called his

intuition, on the other his production, or works of art.

Cary, at any rate, believed that he had a theme or intuition of reality, a comprehensive vision of the world. In an interview in 1954 when it was suggested that he was like certain eighteenth century novelists, he was not so sure and seemed to have other ideas: "I don't know who I'm like. I've been called a metaphysical novelist, and if that means I have a fairly clear and comprehensive idea of the world I'm writing about, I suppose that's true".¹³ Indeed, Cary's novels have all proceeded from a remarkably steady vision of the world, one which he experienced in Africa and considered for ten years in Oxford, and the consequences of which are worked out under varied conditions in his fiction. When questioned further as to the character of the world of his novels, he replied:

Roughly, for me, the principal fact of life is the free mind. For good and evil, man is a free creative spirit. This produces the very queer world we live in, a world in continuous creation and therefore continuous change and insecurity. A perpetually new and lively world, but a dangerous one, full of tragedy and injustice. A world in everlasting conflict between the new idea and the old allegiances, new arts and new inventions against the old establishment.¹⁴

This is the theme of Joyce Cary's novels, present in all of them and central to many, especially the First Trilogy. It became for Cary a fact or theorem, which, once he had grasped it, grew in significance for him so that it always shaped his

work. Writing novels, he found, was the only way in which he could successfully express this discovery: "[Art] is the only means by which we can communicate both the fact and the feeling about the fact, which is, in our lives, always the most important thing."¹⁵ Behind this discovery was a deep sense of the quality or significance of the feeling that his "fact of life" produced. The importance of feeling grew to have an increasingly prominent position in the Cary canon: "...the most important part of man's existence, that part where he most truly lives and is aware of living, lies entirely within the domain of personal feeling."¹⁶ Cary felt he had a mission in writing his novels, for he believed he was renewing contact with the realities of life through his intuition as an artist: "...every writer is an evangelist. I am essentially putting something over that I want to be understood. And I want to have an effect because I think it's true. I think my view of life is true. Otherwise I wouldn't be writing about it. And I want it to be understood."¹⁷

In another interview, with Nathan Cohen, Cary again mentioned this special view of the world:

...I've dealt with all different angles in my world, the world as I see it, in my special philosophy of life, the world of creative freedom--the world of creative freedom and its effect on the world. I've written all the different angles on that. I've written

the political angle; I've written it from the point of view, in A Fearful Joy, of change due to mechanical invention, mechanical transport; in The Moonlight I've dealt with it from the point of view of the woman's world, the world that is wished on woman by her sex, whether she likes it or not.¹⁸

Despite the impression that the majority of his reviewers have to the contrary, Cary's novels are, in actuality, philosophical works concerned with the traditional philosophical problems which literature has always known: the problem treated in all the novels is essentially the same: man's creative powers and the limitations imposed upon these powers by the nature of reality.

Apparently Cary would start off with this theme in mind when writing:

Well, I start off with a universal theme. I mean I've got the theme about my whole view of life-- that's what my theme is. I always start off with a character in a certain situation and I'm taking them all the time. I've taken sometimes from life. Sometimes I think about them and write them down and these little sketches may sometimes develop into a short story. I never know. And they sometimes may begin a novel. If they develop, say, beyond a short story length, I say: 'Well, this ought to be a novel. It's too big stuff for a short story.'¹⁹

Although Cary is original in his use of old techniques, he was most anxious to achieve a happy union of intuition and form. In his own view, technique alone is unimportant. It is what is realised in and through technique that counts. He mastered his craft out of concern for his intuition of the nature of the world. In his article, "On the Function

of the Novelist," he says that "The function of the novel ...is to make the world contemplate and understand itself, not only as rational being but as experience of value, as a complete thing."²⁰ To achieve this end he learnt his craft as a novelist. He discusses his own problem at length in the Clark Lectures:

...all great artists are preoccupied, as if by nature, with reality. They assume, from the beginning, that it is their task to reveal a truth about some permanent and fundamental real. The problem of the conflict between the concept and the intuition is always with them. And it is not enough to describe the intuition in words, it has to be given in the work of art.²¹

Cary takes issue with Croce because of the latter's statement that expression is indistinguishable from intuition. Cary insists that there is a gap between reality and our knowledge of it. In fact there are two gaps:

For the novelist, in fact, there is not only a huge gap between intuition and concept, the first raw statement, but between that statement and its working out in a story, a fable. It is easy for a philosopher, seeking a harmonious whole, to say that the two last processes are the same, that having expressed the situation for himself, the artist has taken the essential step--that he has his work of art and that any further operation is simply recording. This is simply not true in professional experience.²²

On the contrary, as Cary takes pains to point out in the lectures:

In all the arts the great problem of the artist is to preserve the force of his intuition, his germ, what is sometimes called his inspiration, throughout the long process of technical construction. For most of

that technical construction is conceptual. The writer, faced with a problem of expression, calls up all his experience, and the greater part of that experience is recorded conceptually and must be so. He asks himself to start with, 'What characters shall I need? What kind of leading character? What background? What general scheme?' Even if he does not design a plot to begin with, he forms, and has to form, a general idea of the working-out in action of his choice of characters. Here, of course, he is faced with another gap, never acknowledged by the philosopher: that between form and content. We are always told that they are inseparable, but this is true only in the art of philosophy. For the writer the situation is very much more complex. He has to deal with language which consists, it is true, of forms which are also contents. That is to say, they are meanings. On the other hand he has his intuition, the emotional experience that he wishes to convey in all its original force. This is to be the content of his book, but when he gets to work he has to ask himself how the manipulation of words, themselves already charged with meaning, will convey this other larger meaning which is to be his content. And when he has put them together in scenes conceptually devised to convey this content, he has to ask himself if they do so; that is to say, he has, on the one hand, a set of forms, and on the other hand, the content which he wishes to convey. He is of course actually comparing two contents, that of the forms he has on the page and that of the content he has in his imagination. But in this comparison, the first set of forms, the symbols on the page, have a double aspect: that of their content, as symbols, sentence by sentence and page by page, and that of their total effect.²³

One of the conclusions which results from this line of thinking is that "...the writing of a novel is not only the exploration of a theme, of character, of possibility, but of technical limits."²⁴

Against the background of the technical problems involved in successful self-expression remains Cary's intuition, conceptually worked out and then reexpressed with what must

be the equivalent force of the original intuition of the real world as a character which is, essentially, a personal, free character. The original intuition, transformed into concept and then by Cary's art back into intuition of another index, remains as a common factor presenting a world of characters who are free, moral agents deciding their own actions in a world of incessant vicissitude in which every moral problem is itself unique. Against this background each character, through his creative imagination, builds his own universe and supplies himself with ideas which he will realise in the world about him.

CHAPTER II THE AFRICAN NOVELS: AISSA
SAVED, AN AMERICAN VISITOR, MISTER JOHNSON

(i) Aissa Saved

Joyce Cary's first published novel, Aissa Saved, appeared in 1932, when he was forty-four years old. It deals with the life and death of a negro girl in the grip of the religious imagination. In effect, her religion is a conglomeration of Christian and pagan ideas, as is the case with all Cary's African converts. The general plot is built around a drought and the efforts of both pagans and Christians to bring rain--the pagans through sacrifice, the Christians through prayer. At the end of the book Aissa, now "saved", is sacrificed.

The novel deals with "individual religion" as opposed to the religion of the churches. The distinction between the two arises from Cary's protestant view, for the former is for him, in the Arnoldian sense, true religion, being intimately connected with conduct. Moreover, "individual religion" is but another facet of the creative imagination; it is that form of the imagination which combines religious emotion with conduct and which extracts a religious significance from the chaos of life, thus providing a basis for conduct. In Aissa Saved, however, the confusion is increased by the close proximity of irreconcilable Pagan and Christian practices.

In this respect the situation presented in the novel is unusual, but in the exploration of the religious imagination at work in Aissa's attempts to extract religious meaning from the events about her the novel has universal implications concerning the nature of all religious experience. Aissa Saved, then, focuses on

...the beliefs or unconscious assumptions which actually govern conduct. These assumptions are different in every person. That is to say, everyone has his own faith. Of course each great religion does draw large numbers of people together in general rules of conduct, and general statements of belief. But each person makes a particular application of the rules and mixes them up with a lot of other ideas and rules drawn from all kinds of sources. This is a fundamental situation due to the nature of things; the fact, for instance, that each individual has to think for himself, and that no religion can cover the infinite variety of problems thrown up to quite ordinary people, living quite ordinary lives.²⁵

From this statement on religion arises an important point. On first reading Aissa Saved, one would hardly think that Aissa's life is "quite ordinary." But the wider significance of the general principles in operation must be recognized for an understanding of all the African novels: although overtly dealing with the problems of Africa and the Africans, these early novels by Cary can be, and are meant to be, read at more than one level. The characters in all these novels have universal qualities. Their conflicts are not merely African, but also European, and, indeed, global. This becomes more apparent upon consideration of To be a Pilgrim, a novel with

an English setting, but one that deals essentially with the same questions posed in Aissa Saved and An American Visitor. That is to say, then, that Africa, in the novels, presents an artistically just microcosm. Against a simplified social background, Cary is able to construct his themes.

Unfortunately, when Aissa Saved first appeared, its wider implications were not understood, and Cary found himself in the uncomfortable position of having to apologise for something he had never meant:

Some correspondents took the book for an attack on the Missions. It is not so. African missions have done good work in bringing to Africa a far better faith than any [of] native construction. But it does try to show what can happen to the religious ideas of one region when they are imported into another.²⁶

And again:

I was always impressed in Africa by the odd effects produced when Christian teaching, especially fundamentalist Christian teaching, for instance from the Old Testament, got mixed up in some primitive mind with ju-ju and animism. I did not intend to attack the missions, which have done magnificent work in Africa--which by themselves, apart altogether from the opening up of the country, justified our conquest. When I was in Africa the missions were still doing nearly all the elementary education. Many people say that missions are interfering in Africa. The book is really a study of the actual pressures on both sides.²⁷

For Cary the problem was of another order: "The question is, how sound is the faith; how will it stand the big knock; how deep does it send its roots into reality."²⁸

Whether or not the Africans of 1920 were like Cary's Africans is almost beside the point. But although Cary does fully understand his characters, none of these characters until Mister Johnson, four novels later, has any great stature. This is the result, I think, of the African setting. Africans, on the whole, remain types and seldom become individuals because the intellectual problems of the first three novels tend to overshadow all. It is not until Mister Johnson that Cary reaches the second stage of his development.

Because of this defect in characterisation, the first three African novels are minor works. But they are still good novels. What they lack in characterisation is made up for by Cary's inventiveness, powers of description, and intelligent handling of his thesis; and the characters that do appear are not twisted to fit some predetermined scheme. However, because they contain the germs of later novels, there is a tendency to regard them merely in terms of Cary's development as a writer, without sufficient attention being paid to their individual worth. This is to some extent inevitable, but this study will attempt to present both their achievement as well as their relation ^{to} with Cary's development.

With the exception of Mister Johnson, Cary's African novels have been largely ignored or misunderstood by critics.

However, since the publication of the two trilogies and Art and Reality, his intentions should be more apparent. In the latter work, Cary notes that "Freedom, independence of mind, involves solitude in thought. We are not alone in feeling, in sympathy, but we are alone in mind, and so we are compelled, each of us, to form our own ideas of things, and if we want to convey these ideas and our feelings about them, we have to use art."²⁹ Aissa Saved is an exploration of the emotional experiences of a group of people caught up in the transitional flux of Africa's rapidly changing civilisation. In the preface to the Carfax edition, Cary says: "Ethics are important enough, goodness knows, but the fundamental question for everybody is what they live by; what is their faith. Why don't they cut their throats; why is the fakir happy on his nails; why does the millionaire shoot himself at the dude ranch."³⁰

The Africans, in Aissa Saved, do not know what they live by. They are abandoning their tribal civilisation for the irresistible ways of their white conquerors, which, however, they completely misunderstand. What do people live by? In the book two aspects of European civilisation are presented in three white characters: for the Carrs civilisation means Christianisation; for Bradgate it means Anglicisation. Mr. Carr represents the right wing of the

Church, Mrs. Carr the left. Bradgate, on the other hand, ignores religion (he has not been to a service in thirty years) and lives for order, routine, duty and the satisfaction of a job being well done. To the extent that neither of these two creeds is understood by the Africans, the novel deals with the problem of communication and primitive psychology.

The fact is that though all the characters in the book are very good talkers, none of them is able to listen objectively. Like many of Cary's characters, they are entirely taken up with the worlds of their own imaginations. Various groups are united in feeling, but not in understanding. Carr, to some extent, realises this, and the evil which comes from it, but still is unable to understand the way in which his own words add to the confusion:

How could you defeat a power which was capable of using such as Ojo [a convert] and Hilda [his wife] for his own ends? How could you fight against ambition taking itself for public spirit and egotism pretending to be dependence on God's will. Or even come to grips with greed, lust and selfishness, which could change their very being and appear as industry, love, chastity, and thoughtfulness. And what could you do against the fools? It was not wicked to be foolish, but it was the fools did most of the Devil's dirtiest work. And when would fools cease to be? The fight was obviously hopeless and probably useless. Was he not the biggest fool of the whole party to throw away his health and peace of mind and his best years on such a struggle?³¹

Carr never breaks out of his own world. He does not find

out the meaning his own words have for the Africans. This is exemplified, though not over subtly, in the pagan's reaction to his prayer on arriving at the village of Kolu:

...when Carr, choosing an open place between the meat market and the house walls, knelt down, a general silence fell upon them. The strange words (Carr spoke in English on purpose for experience had taught him that an English prayer was more likely to catch attention at once) excited their interest and voices were heard on all sides asking: 'What does he say, what is it, who is he?' and the replies: 'That's little long nose from Shibi, that's rat face,' and so on, various nick-names for Carr.

'What, is he a school white man?'

'No, he's a ju-ju white man.'

'But what's he say, friends?'

Brimah, a Hausa carrier, employed sometimes at the mission, who was lounging in a quiet corner with a cigarette in his mouth, translated for those near him.

'He's asking the father god of the Christians to drive out Oke and all the Kolu gods.'

Carr, who felt the importance of his opportunity, was imploring God for help and inspiration. He clasped his hands and stretched them above his head, crying earnestly: 'Enlighten these poor people in their darkness and misery, O Lord,' and Brimah was heard: 'And now he's asking God to send the lightning on black men.'³²

Bradgate, the District Officer, also falls into the trap of believing that all people think as he does. He has just finished a speech to the Emir and council on the evils of selling children in time of famine:

It seemed to them all that Bradgate was talking nonsense, but they listened patiently and respectfully and did not think badly of him because (they said) it is his business to tell these tales. They were only perplexed to know his object. But it was generally agreed that his objection to the selling of children, as also to slavery, was religious, because there was

no reasonable explanation for it.

Bradgate, having finished his little speech, which pleased him by its good sense, took leave of the Emir.³³

All are obsessed with their own ideas of the world.

The Carrs with their Christian ideals, which they would realise in Africa; Bradgate with bridge-building and a trade route--leading to a prosperous Yanrin; Ojo with dreams of glory and adulation as Christ's prophet; the mass of people with ju-ju and sacrifices for Oke to bring rain. Essentially, their problem results from their inability to communicate. That is, the failure of their imaginative powers to grasp the general principles governing each others conduct.

Aissa's confusion stems from her complete misunderstanding of the nature of salvation as offered by Christ. It is only at the very end of the novel, when she is dying, that her confusion is resolved and she herself is in a state of grace. The Carrs encourage her to be a "Christian" without ever really finding out what "Christian" means to her. Consequently, her religion is based on an imbroglio of pagan and Christian beliefs. The Carrs, with their Bible classes, only add to the confusion as their converts take the Bible literally. It is the combination of religious enthusiasm with literal acceptance of all Biblical passages that eventually leads to the murders of the Yanrin riots.

In the midst of this confusion stands Aissa. Her desires are not extraordinary: a happy world for herself, for her baby, Abba, and for Gajere, her lover. But she is a Christian only because she believes that by being on the side of the white man's god, all that she wants will be forthcoming:

The girl had inherited plenty of intelligence as well as strong feelings from her Fulani father and she had soon grasped the lessons of the Carrs. She knew that Jesus the Son of God was kind and loving, and that He desired her love. Everyday after her rescue she had gone to the chapel, made Jesus a curtsey, and said; 'I tank you, Jesus, you good to me I good to you.'³⁴

Cary's greatest achievement in the book is his presentation of Aissa's religious experience. At the beginning of the novel, Aissa is at the mission in Shibi, having been rescued from Kolu witch-hunters who believe that her child is a witch. Having been nursed by the Carrs, she recovers her health and becomes the star-pupil of the confirmation class. She is profoundly grateful to Jesus for having saved her and her baby. But she remains after her conversion, as she was before, a tragic figure:

The usual butt in country villages is an idiot or an epileptic, but Aissa had just as good qualifications as these because she could not hide her feelings. The stupidest could perceive the workings of her brain while she rushed from place to place, bewildered, incredulous, tumbling from one trouble into another, and always a worse one. Everyone except the youngest understood because everybody had suffered the same kind of misfortunes himself; but (what made the joke so good) not such violent ones and not so many.³⁵

As might be expected, her concept of Christianity leads her into more trouble. But there is a consistent logic to her actions and she is always in character. At a fertility dance, in her usual manner, she gives way to her emotions, and her troubles begin again:

'Hold my tongue!' Aissa shouted. 'Why, I'm not afraid. I belong to Jesus now. It's the truth I tell you. We Christians are going to drive your Oke away. Then the rain will fall. Then all will be Christians. Then it will be the Kingdom of Heaven and Jesus will come. Then we'll all have plenty to eat and we'll have a good time always.'³⁶

Aissa creates her own world of confusion. When Moshalo, the priestess of Oke, comes, she continues to do so:

'Why, is it Moshalo? The diseased one, the liar. Her god is a lie too.' (Aissa said this to please her own god and win his support.)³⁷

And again:

'Don't you dare to touch me,' Aissa shouted, 'I belong to Jesus, the white man's god, and if you touch me he'll shoot his lightning at you.'³⁸

Having caught her, her captors decided to break her limbs and leave her on an ant-hill to die, and by the time Ali, one of Bradgate's disciples, appears to prevent her murder, one ankle has already been broken. Thrown into prison, she becomes delirious and as a result of her newly-acquired Christian conscience and imagination, she sees and speaks with the "holy gote." Cary's understanding of the psychology of Aissa produces a dramatic hallucination

which reveals her mind in action and a dialogue which is both convincing, being in character, and at the same time necessary for the development of his plot:

'You are very good to me, God,' she told him: 'I belong to you now. I you girl, I good Christian girl. Abba, Gajere, belong for you too. Abba good Christian chile. Gajere want to be Christian too much. He agree for you God, I tink you fit agree for him. He very good man, Gajere.'

She did not humble herself before God because she did not wish to appear like one with a guilty conscience; and she spoke to Jesus in the same manner. 'Jesus you do plenty good thing for me I always do good for you, pray you every day, Jesus. You good frien to me Jesus, I know that.'

.
A cold air breathed on her face. Fearful that the spirit would enter her she caught herself by the nose, and kept her mouth shut. This stratagem, always recommended in the district to exclude spirits, was successful, but naturally it still further irritated the messenger of God, who said to her at once in an angry voice, 'You very wicked girl, Aissa.'

'I do nutting, I do nutting,' Aissa screamed, forgetting her precautions in order to defend her character. But she knew that she had committed very bad sins, in leaving the mission, in getting drunk, in lying with Gajere who was several other women's husband.

'You fool girl, Aissa,' said the spirit, 'you say you no run away, you no leave Ma Carr, you no drink dem beer.'

'Oh, Sah, I no want drink dem beer, I no like dem beer, he make me sick for belly.'

You wicked girl what you tell me? You no tink God no see you go wit dat pagan man. You tink you put cloth over your head, God no see. You no tink, you fool girl, he send his eyes look under cloth, see you play with Gajere?'

'No, no, no,' Aissa screamed in terror, holding Abba beneath her so tightly that he also began to howl, 'I no love him, sah. I no love him tall.'

.

The spirit was not deceived and Aissa scarcely hoped to deceive it, but she continued to argue without ceasing. Sometimes she shrieked with anger at the charges brought against her, sometimes she begged for mercy, sometimes she laughed at the very notion of having anything to do with such a person as Gajere.³⁹

This first conversation with God's waziri is a preparation for the other visions that Aissa will have. However, as a result of her sense of sin, she loses her faith, until Mrs. Carr manages to return her to the fold. Her reconversion, however, inspires her to lead a holy war against the pagans in Kolu, although she finds herself an unwilling servant of god. This last expedition ends in her death on an ant-hill, but her faith in Jesus remains to the very end:

Aissa soon grew weak; she could not remember where she was, the fire of the ants' tearing at her body did not scorch, it was like the warmth of flesh. Jesus had taken her, he was carrying her away in his arms, she was going to heaven at last to Abba and Gajere. Immediately the sky was rolled up like a door curtain and she saw before her the great hall of God with pillars of mud painted white and red. God, in a white riga and a new indigo turban, his hands heavy with thick silver rings, stood in the middle and beside him the spirit like a goat with white horns. Abba was sitting on its back looking frightened and almost ready to cry. One of the angels was holding him and putting his cap straight. The others were laughing at him and clapping their hands.

Aissa fearing that he would cry and disgrace himself with the important company waved and beckoned to attract his attention. At once as if feeling that she was there he looked down at her and smiled gravely.

Aissa held out her arms to him and shouted, 'Oh, you rascal.' She could not help laughing at him. She was helpless with laughter.⁴⁰

The great strength of Aissa Saved lies in Cary's complete understanding of his characters. Although there is not much differentiation between members of the same group, for instance the African converts, nonetheless Cary's penetration into the minds of his creations is, for the purpose of the book as an artistic whole, complete. Aissa is indeed saved, for her faith in God remains till death, which is the essential requirement of Christianity for salvation; her religious imagination proceeds in a recognizable manner, only the circumstances are different.

(ii) An American Visitor

If in Aissa Saved Cary asked the question "What do men live by?" and showed Africans attempting, albeit unsuccessfully, to assimilate white postures, in An American Visitor he explores the consequences of acting on an ill-founded philosophy. Africa's emerging from tribal society into Western civilization focuses Cary's ideas of the creative imagination and the attempts of the individual to construct for himself a more satisfying world. The resulting problems

in turn lead him to consider the relationship between tradition and innovation in civilization. Thus the time of the novel is one of transition--transition from the old to the new, and in the persons of Marie Hasluck, the American visitor; Bewsher, the District Officer; Gore, the young official; and Cottee, the mining prospector, we are presented with four approaches to that flux of life and ideas which is inherent in the transitional phase of a culture.

With the possible exception of Henry, Marie Hasluck's cook, there is no major character among the Africans in the novel since the problem dramatized in An American Visitor is really one of the white, civilized world. Of the white characters, two stand out: Marie Hasluck and Bewsher. They represent two very different minds involved in the same situation, and although they eventually marry they have nothing in common in their approach to life ("Bewsher the toughest old pagan and rationalist you could find and Marie the real Boston mystic, direct in descent from Emerson and Thoreau.")⁴¹

Cottee, whose chief function is to explain Marie and the situation she creates, supplies through his cynicism much of Cary's own thought. However, he disrupts the traditional life of the native Birri in his efforts to start a mining camp in Lower Nok. Gore is a sensitive conservative who tries to maintain the old workable status quo in the management of the

native population, although he is doomed to failure by the influx of European ideas into the area.

"Life in a primitive tribe," Cary tells us, "is monotonous and boring. It survives, when it does survive, only because the people who suffer it have no idea of anything better."⁴² This is his explanation for the Africans' frantic eagerness to adopt European ways despite the ensuing chaos. "So we have confusion, conflict, the destruction of old values before the new are established. But this is the perpetual situation of the whole world--it always has been."⁴³ Cary has an essentially organic view of civilization; despite the confusion of change and the general bewilderment of those caught up in the flux, not only evil emerges from chaos; truth, beauty, and goodness also renew themselves and emerge only in different forms. Cottee, almost formally summarizes Cary's presentation of creative turmoil in the novel:

The fact was, of course, that people like Gore couldn't suit themselves to a world in transition. They were inelastic, too much attached to the old standards. Gore's very eyebrows seemed fixed in the melancholy question, 'Why should everything go to pot at once, the sound and splendid as well as the bad? Why not keep the good and reform the rest? That wouldn't be hard. You've only got to be a little reasonable. Wait a bit, good people. These things you are destroying can't be replaced in a hurry and they may be necessary to you. Loyalty, truth, tolerance, kindness, even modesty will be wanted again--and you will enjoy the graces of life as soon as you know what they are. Only wait till things are better--till you are better off--till you have leisure--till you have time to think--to know what life really is about. A pathetic, a ridiculous sight. Like

the old lady in the Russian story whose house was raided by drunken soldiers and who went down alone to face them in the hall. 'Friends, here is all the money, and the food is in the larder, but please be careful of the furniture and pictures. These cabinets hold only the china you see--nothing is hidden in them and they are beautiful--unique. The china is irreplaceable.' So of course they said, if this old woman has risked her life for these cabinets and teapots they must be full of money and they smashed everything to pieces, and when they could not find any money they put the old lady on the fire to make her confess--what did she expect?

And it wouldn't have been any good to tell that old lady that beauty would not perish with her Sevres--that the roots of beauty were as indestructible and as fertile as life itself--that though cruelty and lies might carry all before them for a time, they had never yet succeeded in abolishing the things of the spirit. It wouldn't be any good because she was herself a period piece--her tastes and virtues had the forms of her time and she couldn't learn to appreciate or even understand any other. She was part of her period and it was made of sentiments and attachments and associations which by their very nature could not be transferred. The greater a period, the stronger the allegiance and interdependence of its human parts,--the more difficult its liquidation, the more painful for these fragments. People like Gore and Bewsher couldn't help themselves. Feudal anachronisms, servants of the king...

How could they bear to see everything they valued, and rightly valued, suddenly overwhelmed and trampled into rubbish by movements as wild and unpredictable and stupid as a stampede of bullocks.

What comfort to them to know that the time of liquidation could not last and that when it crystallized out into the new civilization it might take forms more austere and rigid than anything known to them--a new feudalism of service, bleak, cruel, heroic, magnificent and highly intolerant of quacks, demagogues, and Peck-sniffs. They would not like it any better even if they could live to see it.⁴⁴

The primary concern of An American Visitor emerges as a result of the problems inherent in creativity and its necessary prelude of destruction, namely the conflict between authority

and the individual, the rulers and the ruled. The difficulties of government were always of interest to Cary, especially after his days as a colonial administrator in Nigeria. Characteristically, in this novel, he approaches the whole complex subject in terms of the individual's creative imagination and the limitations imposed upon this faculty both by the nature of reality within any given situation and by those in authority who, after all, are more concerned with the general welfare of all the individuals who comprise the state. As a former administrator, Cary deplores not only anarchists, but also irresponsible idealists who, obsessed with some particular notion, fail to take cognizance of the actualities of any administrative crisis.

It becomes evident as the novel progresses that Cary's view of the idealist is similar to that of Shaw. Their heroes are those who by a creative effort of the imagination are able to grasp the realities of a situation and not be led astray by any pre-conceived notions which may come between them and the situation. In a time of transition these men are particularly important, as Cary demonstrates in the person of Monkey Bewsher who manages for a while to guide the people in his charge while their culture is undergoing radical change. If Bewsher did not succeed in this endeavour, it was because of mistaken notions about the aims of government on the part of the other whites.

A certain bitterness occasionally enters the novel, for Cary had grown somewhat sensitive to negative criticism of formal government during his Nigerian Service. He identifies hostility to the Empire primarily with militant protestantism. In An American Visitor Cottee, when talking of Marie, says, "'Is it the protestant strain?...Is it because when every man is in direct communication with providence he doesn't see that he needs government or what governments are for except to do the devil's work.'"45 Cary tells us in the preface to the Carfax edition of An American Visitor that he "knew a good many preachers, especially from America and Scandinavia, who had a horror, amounting to hatred, of the government official."46 He relates that a friend of his had the greatest difficulty in getting two missionaries to speak to him, although he was the only other white man within fifty miles: "His crimes were that he left native religion alone, that he drank two whiskies and sodas every evening, above all that he represented the British Empire and administered the law."47

Cary, at the time this novel was written, appears to have *had* little sympathy with anarchic idealism, with those people who believed in "God's way to peace" and that peace would come by "natural" development, without enforcement of law. He says that these people have "not faced reality--that just as no state can exist without police, if only to regulate conflicting

purposes, so the world [needs] some power, imperial or international, only to enforce law."⁴⁸

Cary perceives both protestant hostility and anarchic idealism in the American attitude to the League of Nations, and says that it seemed to him to throw light on the American refusal to join the League, although it was obvious that such a refusal would smash it. The presence of the rather harsh tone which often seems on the verge of dominating the novel is not so surprising, for Cary tells us

I was a strong league of nations man--I was in a country full of social and tribal conflict where it was hard to devise even the elements of security and a reasonable life, especially for the masses. I knew something at first hand about lawlessness as well as despotism. The everlasting conflict between authority and freedom was not an academic subject in Nigeria, it cropped up every day in a country where the traditional frame was in collapse and law had to be built while the queue waited.⁴⁹

With some qualifications, in the novel Cary sides with authority, although both in the novel and in its preface he makes it plain that he does not believe that there is any final solution to the problem of balancing lawlessness and despotism:

...the truth seems to lie deeper. It is that the faith which lies beneath anarchism is just as necessary to the world as the reason which creates systems of law.

If none had ever rebelled against the law in the name of freedom, we should still be living in the stone-age under the tyranny of some juju priest-king or tribal Politburo.⁵⁰

His final view, demonstrated in the career of Bewsher in

the novel, rests firmly on the creative imagination:

I was asked about the American visitor, So What? And this is all the answer one can give. There is no rule. The situation in family life as in politics is always unique; it has to be dealt with by the imagination, by a creative effort of the mind. And since only individuals can possess imagination, there is always need of the individual ruler whatever he or she is called.

It is the essential job of political officers, whether they are mothers in their nurseries, or 'Pagan men' in the back bush or the first ministers of great states, to take responsibility for dodging their own laws or breaking their own rebels.⁵¹

Although An American Visitor, like most of the African novels, has not yet been published in the United States, it has attracted the attention of one American critic. Warren French, in his essay "Joyce Cary's American Rover Girl," sees An American Visitor as another aspect of the Ugly American, which, to some extent, it is. As he points out, Cary's American is not the man of money, a crude loud fellow who knows no values but mechanical and commercial ones:

Cary introduced...a surprising and distrubing new theme into the European criticism of America. He examines the American, to employ the metaphor Allen uses in his essay, not as neo-Carthaginian but as pseudo-Greek. He depicts not the man who knew Coolidge, but the girl who read Thoreau; and though Cary looks at the American with her head in the clouds rather than the American with his feet in the muck, he offers no more flattering picture than the celebrators of Hollywood burial rites. He leaves with the reader the notion that undisciplined idealism may be as destructive as self-seeking materialism if it rests upon the same inadequate philosophical foundation.⁵²

Marie is presented as the American idealist who abhors

all formal government:

Why couldn't she remember to keep quiet about the Empire. Yes, but it was because she liked these people so much that she hated to see them fixed in positions of domination and cruelty, in an artificial structure where even kind little Jukes and good-natured Frank were obliged to play the part of exploiters; and Mr. Gore, who looked like a St. Francis, to be a tyrant over the conquered.⁵³

However, Marie, the American visitor and free-lance journalist, oscillates between two extremes. Her first attitude, with which she came to Nigeria, classifies her as belonging to "the most modern school of anthropologists" who believe in the "Golden Age, the noble savage, and all the other resuscitated fancies of Rousseau." Thus, in her first article for home consumption, she writes:

In Birri there is nothing of what we in America and in Europe call civilization.... The independent spirit of the natives and the rarely enlightened policy of the District Officer, Mr. Eustace B. Bewsher (Marie hoped that Gore would show the article to Bewsher) has preserved the primitive culture of the tribe both from the so-called education of the mission and the development of finance. The result is that the Birri are probably the happiest and wisest people in the world. To pass from what we call civilization into this obscure district of Nigeria is like going out of a lunatic asylum where the keepers are crazier than the patients into a spring morning of the Golden Age.⁵⁴

Marie's philosophy of life is inadequate because it fails to take the principles of organic life into account. She is continually trying to find a ready made perfection which will be absolute. But absolute perfection is impossible. The best one can hope for is to be able to maintain the right balance,

as Bewsher realises, between the forces of innovation and conservatism. It is her inability to realise and accept this fact of life that brings tragedy down upon her head. Her first shock comes when she realises that the Birri people worship power and that whoever kills Bewsher will be a hero for life. In a conversation with Cottee she receives a second blow to her faith:

'The Birri are the happiest kind of people,' she said; 'we have nothing to give them but disease and lies and poverty and envy and vulgarity. They're doing no harm to us--they're not asking for anything from us--quite the other way. But we just can't help spoiling this beautiful thing. Why can't we? Why can't we be satisfied with making all America and Europe fit for millionaires to live in?'⁵⁵

Cottee immediately questions the superiority of Birri culture, ways of life, and education. Marie replies that "of course the education had to be of a certain kind; you had to bring people up to like the right things, the natural things."

Cottee seizes upon the word "natural" and wins his point:

"'Nature or God, it's all the same if it makes the rules. So Birri is really the kingdom of heaven. It doesn't need a government because it's been put on the right lines for ever.'"⁵⁶

Bewsher, when Marie appeals to him, replies that Birri didn't run itself. It is through Cottee that Marie is defined:

Cottee dawdled round the fire to mix himself another drink and said to Marie, 'So your Birri is not the Noo Jerusalem after all.'

Marie did not answer him. She was still looking at

Bewsher with a surprised and indignant expression.

'That's what all you people want, isn't it--the golden city. You want to get rid of politics and all that horrid machinery which is always going wrong and frightening the children--all these complicated diplomacies and Leagues and Unions and Empires and Alliances so that you can go back to natural obligations and natural rights, isn't that the word--back to providence.'

'But it's you that want to smash up the Birri machinery--machinery that really does work.'

'Not a bit of it.' Cottee was irritable with the woman. 'All I say is that it's out of date and ought to be scrapped for something more modern. I want to improve the government, you want to abolish it.'

'What nonsense, Frank.'

'You're just an anarchist like so many others from your side; only you don't know it.'⁵⁷

In contrast with Marie, Bewsher is essentially a static character. He is an idealist too, but unlike Marie's his idealism is based on an imaginative approach to each situation as it arises. He knows that the traditional Birri culture, if left to itself, would collapse under the pressure of the imported white civilisation. He also realises that change is inevitable. His aim is to adapt the Birri to modern civilisation without disrupting their society by forming an all-Birri federation: "[Bewsher]...who may have developed, like so many of the Nigerian pioneers, some odd notions...had nevertheless a consistent idea of what he was driving at, to preserve and develop the rich kind of local life which is the essence and only justification of nationalism."⁵⁸ In order to achieve this, he intends to keep out Cottee's

mining concern and the missionaries, which would, he realises, cause the disintegration of the Birri.

Gore and Bewsher represent the finer aspect of the English approach to change. They attempt to keep the system in balance. Unlike Cottee, they believe that change can be brought about without an interval of chaos. Bloodless revolution is their aim, but they are fully aware of the difficulties inherent in the situation. They are Cary's heroes, realists in the Shavian sense of the word. Knowing change must come, they face each situation as it arises and try to avoid excessive conservatism or radicalism. They try to prevent both cancer and atrophy in the organism. To the extent that the novel deals with this fundamental conflict in life, it is a criticism of life.

Bewsher, however, is not unopposed in his scheme. Cottee and his associates are after rich brass deposits near the village of Nok in Bewsher's district. When they begin prospecting, the more excitable members of the Nok tribe attack the mission at Goshi. Bewsher, Marie and the missionaries, Mr. and Mrs. Dobson are all at Goshi and are prepared for the attack when it comes. Unknown to Bewsher, Marie, now disenchanted with the Birri, sends for soldiers. Bewsher is against having the soldiers for purely practical reasons: the last time there was a patrol, it put the clock

back in Birri for years, and "'You can't shake hands with a Birri one day and shoot at him the next, he gets the idea you're not to be relied on.'"59 The Dobsons, on the other hand, misinterpret his motives:

'Mr. Bewsher has won the confidence of the most dangerous tribe in West Africa simply by trusting them,' said Mr. Dobson, 'and I hope to follow in his pioneer footsteps.'

'And by trusting God,' said Mrs. Dobson, looking at Bewsher affectionately.

'His trust was of God and in God,' said Dobson in the same apologetic tone as if he wished to excuse himself for talking shop. 'But that is why he understands that after I have been telling these people for a year that we are all in God's hands and He will keep us and guard us, they would be a little bit surprised to see me calling in soldiers to protect God's house and people at the first suggestion of trouble.'60

When the attack comes, Bewsher, by running in front of the troops, prevents them from firing and is able with the help of Obai, one of his disciples, to route the Birri by swearing at them:

Meanwhile the Goshi Birri had already bolted, fighting their way through their allies, and the Nok themselves were wavering. The treachery of Goshi, the sudden appearance of Obai on the other side, Bewsher's indignation were too much for their patience. They ran or rather walked off in disgust, quarrelling violently among themselves. The whole expedition, they said, had not been at all what they expected.61

Soon after this encounter, Bewsher and Marie get married. At the same time, Marie, having lost her faith in the Golden Age, is busily creating a new illusion for herself. Cottee discusses the situation with Gore:

'By the way, has she been talking to you about Christian Science?'

'No,' Gore lied. He did not want Cottee to know that Marie had been writing to him. He opened his book.

'Didn't she?' Cottee looked at him suspiciously. 'All the same, I shouldn't be surprised if they caught her. Now that the nature god is a bit exploded and Birri hasn't turned out to be the Kingdom of Heaven. She certainly inclined that way when Monkey [Bewsher] had a funny pain for a day or two in the bush and she thought he was poisoned.'

'What?'

'Oh! it was probably a dirty cooking-pot. She leaves things to Henry--but the point was that she was talking about the power of faith for the next week. She seemed to think that Monkey had got over strophanthus simply by calling it colic. And when some joker put an arrow through the nuptial mosquito net, she talked as if an arrow or two in the ribs wouldn't matter to the man. His faith would make him whole--of course--she didn't call it faith. She called it guts. But she meant faith.'⁶²

Bewsher fails in his attempt to bring about a Birri federation. Against his wishes, the miners move into lower Nok, and the Birri, including Obai, Bewsher's former disciple, feel that he has tricked them. Ironically, it is their hatred of the miners that provides the Birri with the impetus to form a federation. They will drive away the white men. Bewsher, not realising their reasons and seeing his dream materialise, is overjoyed. He gives them a speech on how to govern themselves and then leaves for a meal: "After that the council took care not to let Bewsher know where he could find them. Their business was too important for interruption; who was to be chief, what was to be done with Bewsher's body?"⁶³

When Bewsher is trapped, the soldiers are again called, but this time Marie opposes their being sent into action. She now believes that "the only thing that could save Monkey was just that he was Monkey." Gore opposes the use of the troops because he feels that as soon as they appear, the Birri will kill Bewsher. Cottee, supposedly concerned for Bewsher's safety, wants the troops to move in. The presence of a patrol would mean that his mining operations could continue unmolested. However, just before the troops set off, Bewsher appears. He has escaped via a "bottomless lake", which turns out to be waist-deep, and which is guarded by juju crocodiles.

The result of the attempt on Bewsher's life is to change Marie's philosophy completely:

The grimace was for the enthusiastic young woman of eighteen months before who had written to America about 'a civilization of athletes and poets, Greek in the beauty of its golden age, but more secure--savages truly noble, bound in the strong web of natural loves and duties as eternal as nature's own laws.'

Of course, Cottee had been right to laugh at her. All these men who accepted so easily the insecurity of things, who simply did not imagine any other state of affairs, were right. Only fanatics and fools, communists and sentimentalists like herself could believe in a natural order of things, fixed and eternal, divinely appointed. The lion-faced Birri--no wonder they laughed. The golden age of Birri, like that of Greece - - -

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Her smile became more derisive. But she felt in her breast an intolerable longing--she wanted to cry--for the silly young woman who had seen in a little community of naked savages the pattern of an earthly paradise. The same silly young woman who at college had adored the Greeks and wished that she had been born two thousand four hundred years earlier.

The golden age of Greece. Galleys full of agonized rowers bleeding under the whip--chained to battered leaking ships--kept from sinking altogether only by the endless patching and plugging of the anxious carpenters creeping about with their tools in the stinking bilges.⁶⁴

Having lost this cherished illusion, Marie naturally grabs the next one that comes along. She envies the Dobsons, local missionaries, their faith in God, and soon she believes that Bewsher's escape is the result of a Divine Providence. Bewsher, though not at all a religious man, nonetheless respects the Establishment (as long as it does not interfere in Birri), and though he does not take Marie seriously, he does not contradict her:

'Do you believe it yourself?'
'Believe what, darling?'
'That God has been looking after you.'
'I've certainly had uncommon luck.'
'John [Dobson] says it was God. You don't believe that, Monkey, do you?'
'That walk out at Paré was rather providential.'
'He says it's a scientific fact.'
'My luck?'
'No, that love is stronger than guns.'
'I daresay there's something in it,' said Bewsher cheerfully. 'And now I suppose I'd better put my coat on for chapel. You're sure you're all right, my dear?'⁶⁵

In the chapel, Bewsher dreams of his all-Birri, his real religion:

And with federation accomplished he could afford to let the traders in. In fact, he would want them, for he would need money to build the courthouses and markets and to make the roads, and that would make his peace with the government. The missions were another pair of shoes. They got at the women, at the very foundations of the domestic system. Think of the Dobsons at Nok and Paré, thoroughly sincere, active, intelligent people with their whole minds on the job of winning souls, and all the knowledge and experience of civilization behind them. No Birri would have a chance against them. They'd play the devil in no time. That would be putting the pike in the pond and no mistake.

He would bar the missions altogether. It would take five years at least, perhaps ten or twenty, to form a thoroughly useful native creed and ritual out of the juju, and pump in the right kind of ethics. Play the game. What would that be in Birri?⁶⁶

Marie, however, is now carried away on her new found

faith:

Marie felt again that wave of triumphant conviction and joy which had carried her into another world. She had called the Christian faith another world and that was true. She was in that world now, the world of faith in God, in love; her whole being said to her, 'It is true.' She did not need to argue with herself. Her mind, her heart assured her of the fact immediately, as she knew that the sun was shining all about her. As the sun filled the air with its transparent flame so God poured his love through all creation invisible only because it was everywhere.⁶⁷

As a result of this religious emotion, when the Birri attack soon after, she hides Bewsher's gun, although he has asked for it realising that this time the Birri mean business. Obai then kills Bewsher and the Birri run off with his body; soon after the soldiers come to Birri:

The casualties were light and the damage easily repaired where housebuilding costs nothing. But the Birri war had the unexpected result of breaking up the Birri. The old patriarchal government disappeared and the people became a mob. Large numbers of the young men drifted away, even during the campaign, to join the flotsam of wandering labourers and petty thieves in the neighbouring provinces.

When Mander took over a year later he found the division in such a state of social and political disintegration that he was extremely glad of the help of the new Pare' company, floated by Cottee after Juke's death, which provided the nucleus for the remnants of the Pare' tribe; and the Nok mission under the Dobsons which gave the river people a centre.

But it proved impossible to make the septs work together and the latest suggestion is to split up Birri....⁶⁸

The novel ends on this note of dissolution. The tragic consequences of trusting in a "natural order" supposedly ordained by God have run their course, and in the words of Warren French " [Cary] has extracted from the jungle an even more ironic criticism of life than Conrad in Heart of Darkness, for Cary shows not the self-destruction of a superficial idealist, but the undoing of a conscientious idealist by inspired irresponsibles."⁶⁹

(iii) Mister Johnson

In the previous novels studied, Cary writes more in terms of his idea of the world as a state of flux than in terms of character. But in Mister Johnson, for the first

time, he is able to concentrate on a character caught in this flux. In other words, instead of dealing with an intellectual concept, his idea of the world, he is able to record his intuition of a character in this world.

In the preface to The African Witch, Cary says that the question, "What makes men tick and keep ticking," is of supreme importance and interest to the novelist. This statement, though undoubtedly true, is also useful in assessing the novelist's achievement in his creation of a character. What is the difference between a Marie Hasluck and a Mister Johnson? The main difference is that Marie is not really a character but an idea. In analyzing her, it is possible to select certain key statements which in effect constitute her psychology and make her rather predictable. With Mister Johnson, on the other hand, character emerges as the result of an accumulation of details, and it is more difficult to refer to specific passages and thus explain him away. The man has taken over the idea, and consequently the novel must be taken as a whole if he is to be understood and honestly represented.

As has been seen, Cary himself points out in Art and Reality that the development of the great writer is the development of his theme--which eventually becomes the cast of his mind.⁷⁰ It would appear that with the writing of

Mister Johnson--incidentally, his easiest novel to write-- Cary's understanding of the world had considerably matured. Instead of being faced with the problem of clarification of his own ideas, as in the other novels, he was able to direct his attention to finding out how these principles manifest themselves in individuals. The idea--his view of the creative imagination which results in the world's being in a state of flux--is ever-present in his mind, but without his making himself deliberately aware of it. Cary's view of the world is an integral part of Mister Johnson, but this view is now subservient to the central character though it finds confirmation and development in the new intuition.

Although Max Cosman believes Cary's use of the historic present is "a valid turn of the stylistic screw," he says it "yields about as much oddity as it does reality."⁷¹ However, the change in the time scheme in Mister Johnson is important. By writing in the present tense, Cary lessens his tendency towards reflective writing and his opportunities for treating conceptually the present in terms of the past at the expense of intuition. Cary the man, at least in the opinion of Enid Starkie, was highly cerebral, and consequently it is not surprising that the less chance he gives himself for direct expression the less there will be of manipulation and mere illustration of concept. In Mister Johnson, then, Cary,

relying on intuition, is able to embody and convey the experience and feeling of a character. The novel has all Mister Johnson's vitality, rather than the lesser animation provided by mere idea or concept. It is not surprising that this impression of life and energy is even more apparent in the trilogies which are narrated in the first person by the subject of the novel.

Actually there were two factors involved which enabled Cary to produce his small masterpiece, Mister Johnson. In addition to the fact that his view of the world had matured, he was by now quite familiar with what may be called the "primitive psychology" of the African. And here indeed is the clue to the force of the book--its simplicity. Despite certain social limitations, the African setting has great advantages: "Basic obsessions, which in Europe hide themselves under all sorts of decorous scientific or theological or political uniforms, are there seen naked in bold and dramatic action."⁷²

But to the simplicity which is attributed to the African mind by white civilization is added an epic quality. For Johnson is primarily a poet, a maker, and to view him merely as an incompetent clerk is to ignore the greater part of the meaning of the book. First, he is endowed with an exceptional imagination, and second, he is highly articulate. As poet-

spellbinder he is able to play on the basic chords of human feeling--his own feeling is elementary: moving from the extremes of love and hate, despair and jubilation--and he is able to inspire others to the same extremes. He is not possessed of any fine shades of emotion, but then men were never moved to action by fine distinctions. Johnson, the poet and myth-maker, moves in elemental realms--and so acquires a special dignity.

Arnold Kettle in an essay on Mister Johnson states:
"The theme of Mister Johnson is the effect of the imposition of an alien code of morals and manners upon a native culture."⁷³
Though this is an important element in the novel, it is not its main concern. Rather, the theme of the work is creativity. Here, Cary is not concerned with a mere transformation from bush to white values, but with Johnson's vision of a new and infinitely more satisfying life and his determination to possess it. He has the imagination to create the vision and the courage to attempt to realise it. In this attempt he becomes both a comic and a tragic figure. Comic for reasons that will be examined, and tragic because his success, like all success in Cary's novels, is only of brief duration. Reconciliation to his fate is possible for the creator only through death. "The pathos and humour of Johnson's position are indicated by its extreme precariousness, which is of course

only a heightened version of the precariousness of the human situation anyway."⁷⁴

Frederick Karl displays in his article "Joyce Cary: The Moralist as Novelist" a complete lack of sympathy with Cary's work as a whole and a considerable misunderstanding of Mister Johnson. He admits that the novel has "a kind of emotional and intellectual honesty at its center", but will grant no more:

This basically humorous novel has as its main theme the changes taking place in Africa that put natives like Johnson in a no-man's land between two cultures, one too backward for him to embrace and the other too complicated and alien for him to be received into it. Johnson is a native who likes white men's possessions, he embezzles, steals, commits fraud, and finally murders. Yet he remains an innocent, a pawn in the hands of a European culture which makes use of him, and then after having tempted him must kill him [*italics mine*].⁷⁵

Elsewhere he says:

Johnson's basic innocence rests on his lack of knowledge-- he indeed wants knowledge (of white man's ways), but he still remains identified with the bush, and his showy assumption of the new culture is merely superficial. Caught between the two, he is a kind of pure fool, anxious to do good and yet careful of his own comforts and sense of respect. Shifting worlds have made him expedient; yet throughout his transformation from bush to white values, he retains his ability to seek and find joy, the one thing the new civilization cannot take from him. Thus, in his way, Johnson remains superior to those he is trying to imitate and transcends the base material that surrounds him [*italics mine*].⁷⁶

Johnson, as the reader soon realises, has the stature of a hero in the novel and possesses a certain nobility. However, Karl describes him merely as a native who, because

he likes white men's possessions, is willing to steal, commit fraud, and murder for his own gratification. He remains innocent because he is a pawn in the hands of European culture. Also, in addition to being a passive creature, he is a kind of pure fool, but is still able to seek and find joy, and thus remains superior to the "base material"--presumably the whites.

This is a facile designation of Johnson's character and being which results in complete misrepresentation. As I have said, to read the novel is to be aware of a certain nobility in Johnson, yet there is no trace of nobility in the above--the man is simply a thief and a murderer. There is the dubious assurance that he is nonetheless innocent because he has been a pawn in the grip of a larger power. Yet, Johnson is not innocent. He is definitely guilty under European law or bush law. But in spite of his guilt he demands and gets admiration. For he has seen a vision of life which, once he has seen it, he will not let slip away. He remains true to himself, to his vision, and so commands admiration. From the point of view of society he deserves to be hanged; from the individual's point of view he deserves homage. He is a dedicated being.

Furthermore, Johnson is anything but a passive figure in the novel. It is his imagination that fires Rudbeck,

that sends the road far North. He is continually influencing others through his vitality and imagination. Neither is he a fool. He has potentialities which reveal themselves partly in his handling of Rudbeck and more especially in his deep understanding of his own people. Also, Johnson does not seek and find joy. He creates it. In building the road, in his ambitions, in his wife even. "Johnson also serves his pleasure, but for him it is pleasure to admire and to create happiness."⁷⁷

Johnson, as I said before, is both a comic and a tragic figure. Johnson the clerk is a comic figure. He fumbles and blunders like a typical nouveau riche of western society in his attempt to impress his friends and live up to the standards of the whites. His reported conversations with Rudbeck (never spoiled for the want of a little embroidery), his "Christian" wedding to his pagan wife, Bamu, all serve to make Johnson the clerk both pretentious and pathetic. His second meeting with Bamu is typical:

He comes again to the yam field and asks her to marry him. He tells her that he is a government clerk, rich and powerful. He will make her a great lady. She shall be loaded with bangles; wear white women's dress, sit in a chair at table with him and eat off a plate.

"Oh, Bamu, you are only a savage girl here--you do not know how happy I will make you. I will teach you to be a civilized lady and you shall do no work at all."

Bamu says nothing. She is slightly annoyed by his following her, but doesn't listen to his words. She

marches forward, balancing her load of yams.

Two days later he finds her again in the ferry with her short cloth tucked up between her strong thighs. He gives her a threepenny piece instead of a penny; and she carefully puts it in her mouth before taking up the pole.

"Oh, Bamu, you are a foolish girl. You don't know how a Christian man lives. You don't know how nice it is to be a government lady."⁷⁸

We soon learn that

...Johnson is a temporary clerk, still on probation, called up on emergency from a mission school. He has been in Fada six months and is already much in debt. He gives parties almost every night and he seems to think that a man in his important position, a third-class government clerk, is obliged to entertain on the grandest scale, with drums and smuggled gin.⁷⁹

The humour helps to create one side of his character.

But the joke is on us. The comedy arises from the discrepancy between Johnson's view of himself and the view other people have of him. However, it is the other people, such as Ajali, who have the mistaken vision, not Johnson. It is this almost unacknowledged acceptance on the reader's part of Johnson's own view of himself that gives him stature and gains the reader's sympathy. Johnson the poet makes all feel with him the force of his vision--a vision which puts the conventional view at a decided disadvantage. Johnson's life is a criticism of life.

Johnson, the clerk, is often made to look ridiculous; here he has just been praised by Rudbeck to Tring:

Johnson likes Tring at once, as he likes everybody who gives him the least excuse to do so. As he goes

away from the office, he cocks his hat over his ear, hollows his back and picks up his legs in a kind of goose-step, which makes Tring, looking from the office window, smile. Rudbeck, seeing him smile, says, 'Yes, he cuts a dash--but he's a good chap, all the same.'

'What did your wife call him?'

'Mr. Wog--oh, yes.'

'A real piece of intuition.' And Rudbeck, who greatly respects Tring's brain, looks after Johnson with a slight frown, trying to see what deep truth about Johnson his clever wife has discovered and revealed to the clever Tring in the single word 'Wog.'⁸⁰

But there is another Johnson who is able to get his road gang to do more work and at the same time make it a pleasure:

Rudbeck promotes him headman of all gangs, except the bridgemen under Tasuki. Johnson at once engages twenty more drummers, not apparently to improve the rate of work, but simply to please himself. As he says to Rudbeck, 'I like to hear dose drum when we work. De men like to sing too much.'

He also buys himself a new canopy chair, a white helmet and a pair of patent-leather shoes. He wears the shoes on Sunday; on the other days he goes barefoot, followed by a small boy, carrying the hat and chair. He is never seen to sit in the chair. Whenever he visits a gang, it is set up and the hat laid on the canopy, like a royal crown above the chair of state. Johnson himself, having thus displayed the marks of his rank, goes among the gang, to swap jokes with the drummers or improvise a chorus. Sometimes he takes a hoe or a matchet, but though he makes with them the most tremendous gestures, he does not actually strike the ground or the scrub. He merely illustrates and expresses the act of digging and chopping, so that the actual workers both laugh at him and make a kind of poetry of their own hard work. They laugh while they sing with him:

Bow down, you king of cotton trees;
Put your green heads in the dust;
Salute the road men of Rudbeck,

and yet at the same time they wield their weapons like warriors, utter war-cries and scream insults at the big trees standing in their way.

When Johnson describes the wealth and glory that the road will bring to Fada, the tough old laborers shout at him, 'That's a good trick and sixpence a day for me,' but when he sings,

Here come the motors, foot, foot, whang,
Full of beer and salt,

they join in with the cry

Out of our way, this is the king road.
Where he flies, the great trees fall
The sun and moon are walking on our road.

Everywhere on the road the gangs shout jokes after Johnson, call him 'slave-driver,' 'the tricky one,' 'little-songs,' 'the thief-clerk' and so on. They perfectly understand why they are working harder for him than any of the old headmen, and yet they continue to work harder, to sing and to cry with sincere appreciation of their own efforts, 'Allah, what a road!'⁸¹

"Mr. Johnson," Cary tells us, "is a young clerk who turns his life into a romance, he is a poet who creates for himself a glorious destiny."⁸² Every situation "has been given into his hands, like wood to be carved or a theme to be sung."⁸³ His life moves from joy to sorrow and back again; he makes it an art, and like all artistry it is doomed in the nature of things. For Cary's view of life is essentially tragic:

...in his broadcast conversation with Lord David Cecil, published as 'The Novelist at Work', he has spoken of 'this world which is condemned to be free; which is condemned to be free and condemned to live by its imagination'. And the creative action of the imagination is unceasing, continuous, each man 'trying to create a universe which suits his feelings'. Inevitably, since each man is unique and his shaping fantasy unique, his fantasies clash with those of his fellows and, often, with the established order of society, the generally accepted scheme of things. For the individual the

consequences may be tragic; equally, from the standpoint of society, they may be comic: in Cary's novels the comic and the tragic are different sides of the one coin.⁸⁴

Speaking in his own person in Aissa Saved, Cary says:

The man who has knocked his toe on a stone can't help laughing when he sees another do so and how much funnier it is when the other, having stubbed his toe once, immediately does it again, and falls against a wall or into a dung heap. That's not only just like life but better than ordinary life.⁸⁵

Finally, Johnson, as would be inevitable for Cary, is forced to commit a murder, through accident rather than design, in the course of preserving his vision of life. Andrew Wright says "His last great act is the greatest act of all, that of murder". However, this is not so. The murder is inconsequential, unnecessary and not intended. Johnson is not great because he murders, but because he remains true to himself--to his vision--even though he has been sacked and humiliated by Rudbeck. It is his refusal to admit defeat that first makes him steal and second results in the murder. In a way, when he is executed, he dies for his art. His tragedy, which is never far below the surface throughout the novel, is the human tragedy heightened--he cannot remain triumphant for long and he can only find reconciliation to this state of affairs in death:

Johnson feels extraordinary lightness and cheerfulness. His mind is full of active invention. He wants to do or say something remarkable, to express his affection for everything and everybody, to perform

some extraordinary feat of sympathy and love, which, like a statesman's last words, will have a definite effect on the world.

But at the same time, physically, he is glued to the floor. His body and legs are not heroic. They are so languid with fear that they seem to be dead already. Their exhausted nerves seem to say, 'Do what you like to us, but don't ask us to do anything.'

He hears Rudbeck's chair creak, and, peeping, sees him get up slowly. He says to himself, 'I no 'fraid of nutting--Johnson no 'fraid of nutting in de worl'.' But he sinks down a little lower. His body is almost fainting.

But Rudbeck does not say, 'It is time now.'⁸⁶

Instead he blows his brains out, and Johnson has shaped his life even in the manner of his death.

CHAPTER III THE NOVELS OF CHILDHOOD:

CHARLEY IS MY DARLING, A HOUSE OF CHILDREN

(i) Charley is My Darling

Everyone in Cary's novels is an artist or a creator-- in the widest sense of the terms.⁸⁷ All are faced with the raw stuff of life which they endeavour to shape and to formulate either to find a meaning in life or to communicate an experience to others. Although none of the children in Charley is My Darling and A House of Children may become artists in the usual sense of the word, they are at the first stage of all artistic careers. They are trying to extract a meaningful pattern from the chaos of life about them:

Everyone uses his imagination in order to construct for his own use a more or less balanced and rational idea of life, what it is and what it does and what it is for, out of the mass of events and impressions hurled at him from all sides at every moment of the day. And the value of his construction is in direct proportion with the number of events which fall into place within the frame of his scheme.

The only difference, in this respect of the creative act, between the ordinary citizen and the writer, is that the writer has to use a far more critical judgment in arranging his scheme of things.⁸⁸

Meaning is largely arrived at through conceptualization, and though Charley Brown and young Evelyn Corner may be unable to express their ideas and feelings about the world, they are trying desperately to classify their experiences in terms of a concept of life so that the experiences themselves will be

more meaningful.

Charley is My Darling deals with the attempts of a fifteen year old to create a world for himself which will have significance. Possessing a powerful imagination, he responds to the life about him by setting himself impossible ideals of behaviour. When frustrated in his attempts at magnificence and in his apprehension of general principles which govern life, Charley Brown, the London evacuee, becomes a juvenile delinquent, although his delinquency, like Mister Johnson's murder, is almost beside the point. For the centre of Charley Brown's life, indeed the centre of the novel, is the search for a meaning in life; and it is sheer exuberance of imagination working in unfamiliar circumstances that causes him to run foul of the law. "For children, with their powerful imaginations and weak control, the wonder is not that they do some wrong, but that they don't do much more."⁸⁹

In Cary's view, a child is primarily a creator. He is that of necessity, for though he may be at one with those he loves through a bond of sympathy, he has, nonetheless, to form a system of ideas which will not conflict with reality; he has to learn and think for himself. Fortunately, every child is provided by nature with an insatiable curiosity which creates within him an unceasing desire for discovery (and reflection about that discovery) in the world about him:

But the world that stands to be explored is also a moral structure which, simply because it is one of related ideas, is much harder for him to grasp. He perceives that it is there, he feels its importance to his comfort and security every moment of the day, but it is not present to his eyes and ears; he cannot see and touch it. He is not equipped with the experience and judgment necessary to put it together for himself. For this purpose nature has provided him (and many other small mammals which grow slowly in understanding) with parents. And if they refuse the duty of making the situation clear to him he will suffer. I am ready to bet that a good deal of what is called neurosis and frustration among young children is due to nothing but the failure of parents and teachers (often the most conscientious) to do so, that is, to give a clear picture without uncertainties. Without such a picture, children don't know where they are, and they do all kinds of evil (because it is just this sphere of good and evil that is puzzling them) to find out. A child will torture a cat or some other smaller child, in order to see what will happen, both to himself and the victim, and what he feels like in the new circumstances. The 'crime' is a moral experiment.⁹⁰

Though Charley does not torture either cats or children (he himself is tortured), he is looking for an integrating principle in life: "[His] imagination is always looking for significance; both in the physical and moral world, that is its job, to put together coherent wholes, a situation with meaning, a place where the child does know, all the time, where he is."⁹¹

Charley is let down by the adult world, especially by his parents: his father appears only to beat him--in compliance with a court order, while his step-mother, though friendly with the boy, does nothing to guide him. Lina Allchin, the young woman in charge of the evacuees, does her best to help

him, but really has no understanding of children's problems. Charley's predicament, heightened only for clarity, is that of every child.

The novel, written like Mister Johnson in the present tense, treats each situation as it is being lived by the central character. The urgency of the child's search for understanding is caught, for life is always here and now, being experienced, puzzling, and often incomprehensible:

The children are at the stage where they are experiencing and feeling and--most important of all--trying to formulate their experience. There is throughout a sense of wonder at every new situation that arises. They do not really know what to make of it.⁹²

Much of the book's charm lies in Cary's understanding of and sympathy with the children's reactions when confronted by the incomprehensible. Often they find release from their sense of frustration through a farcical acting out of the confusing situation. For an example of this representation of frustration, there is the scene in which Charley is baffled by the discourse of Mr. Lommax, an artist who is giving classes for the evacuees:

He has stood aside from the picture and Charley glances at it again. But it is only a row of men, upside down, cutting an upside down field. Charley is full of derision. He feels a violent urge to laugh. Ginger suddenly moves his lips at him as if to utter his twanky-twank; Charley, startled, jumps, and then, when the twank does not come, explodes through his nose. Wandle and Lommax both turn in surprise. The boys dart away and as Charley rushes after Ginger up the corridor,

he says: 'Ah doant bulleeve in genius, Jimmy, but if the worrd as a meaning, it means bullock shit.' He wants to abuse the grown-ups in the rudest possible words, to make fun of them and all their ideas. What else can he do with them since he can't get hold of their meaning?⁹³

Indeed, there is an element of this same kind of farce underlying all Charley's exploits, and as his confusion becomes greater the farce becomes wilder, until his exploits lead him into juvenile delinquency. In the book there is an interesting parallel between two scenes which proceed in much the same manner. The first scene is that where Charley and his gang are sitting in their "cave". It is a wet, rainy night and eventually their "cave", where they have spent their happiest moments in the book, collapses about them. The second scene is the wrecking of Burls House. Although some critics object to Charley is My Darling, and much of Cary's other work, on the grounds that there is a preponderance of farce, the farcical elements in his novels have an underlying significance: where there is farce there is injustice, and injustice forms an integral part of his vision of the world.⁹⁴ And here justice is of the greatest interest and importance to the children. Witness the teen-aged Lizzie, who is Charley's sweetheart:

Further discussion in the next hour showed gradually that Lizzie liked a picture in which the good people were rewarded with happiness and the bad people were severely punished. When Charley, who had heard such

pictures criticised, pointed out that they were not true to life, she agreed at once, but said: 'That's why I like em--tis a sweet change.'⁹⁵

Although, as has been noted, the children are at the first stage of all artistic careers in their attempts to extract a significant pattern from the chaos of life which surrounds them, one of their greatest problems in the novel is that of self-expression, which in turn brings up the whole problem of communication:

But all their talk is full of repetitions, attempts to catch in a few worn words feelings as strong and deep as they are fresh. Thus they are like four dumb poets to whom the smallest experience has the effect of a revelation but who are compelled to express these powerful original feelings in mere sighs or cries. Moreover, they have not the faintest idea that there is anything remarkable in the force of their wonder, their affection, their hope, their criticism of the world, and so they try to express them, not for the sake of each other but only for themselves. Their talk is half ejaculation.⁹⁶

Indeed, the poignancy which surrounds the pathetic figures of Charley and Lizzie towards the end of the book is largely the result of their inability to communicate successfully with the outside world. Andrew Wright notes the significance of this isolation: "There is the terrible loneliness of Charley Brown in Charley is My Darling, a loneliness assuaged from time to time by his disastrous love affair with a significantly deaf farm girl. For--and Cary says it, shows it, again and again--man is isolated just because he is free."⁹⁷

(ii) A House of Children

The novel, A House of Children, is concerned with many of the problems that occur in Charley is My Darling, but nonetheless it is a very different novel. Essentially a reminiscence of childhood,^{in it} the central character, Evelyn Corner, remembers his childhood. The Child is father of the man--and through his remembrance of things long past, the boy explains the man to himself:

Grown-ups live and love, they suffer and enjoy far more intensely than children; but for the most part, on a narrower front. For the average man or woman of forty, however successful, has been so battered and crippled by various accidents that he has gradually been restricted to a small compass of enterprise. Above all, he is perplexed. He has found out numerous holes and inconsistencies in his plan of life and yet he has no time to begin the vast work of making a new one.... I think that is the reason for the special sadness of nearly all grown-up faces, certainly of all those which you respect; you read in their lines of repose, the sense that there is no time to begin again, to get things right. The greater a grown man's power of enjoyment, the stronger his faith, the deeper and more continuous his feeling of the waste of life, of happiness, of youth and love, of himself.⁹⁸

Working through a principle of association of emotions and association of sensations which stimulate the imagination and memory, the novel presents only a vague time scheme, but it does capture the development of childhood, the processes and influences whereby the child becomes an individual.

A House of Children deals in large part with a child's intuition of the world about him. This intuition, which

affords the primary knowledge of all artists, is a direct knowledge of the world as it is, direct acquaintance with things, characters, and appearances. But at the same time this direct knowledge of things is being fitted into a larger scheme of life. For education, much of which occurs at home, is and must be conceptual, and though a child may possess intuition and may see the world with an original eye, it is only through conceptually devised methods that he can communicate his vision. Consequently, the novels of childhood are concerned with the notion that life may have meaning through an all-inclusive concept.

Technically speaking, A House of Children represents an improvement on Charley is My Darling, for the central character is presented speaking in the first person as an adult who is relating his childhood experiences. Consequently, it is not out of place for him to comment on his own sensations as a child, and Cary is freed from the unpleasant necessity of explaining his characters in his own person, for the benefit of an imaginary Oxford audience, as so often happens in Charley is My Darling.⁹⁹ Throughout the book there is a tension which is the result of a conflict between thought and feeling. We are made to feel the experiences of childhood, and at the same time reflect on their significance in the development of the child. But by his invention of Evelyn

Corner, the adult, Cary has a character similar to Conrad's Marlow, a character who can be smoothly distanced from action for comment, or where need be, who can take part in the action. This method allows Cary a considerable imaginative insight into the mind of the child.

The incidents in the novel are largely autobiographical. Cary, when describing his own childhood, gives the setting for A House of Children:

...At my grandmother Joyce's, at some holiday house taken for all her grandchildren, I would range over the countryside with a horde of cousins. We went fishing, exploring, stealing rides on other people's horses, sailing on the lough, often for long journeys. We were as free as the mountain slopes and often in mischief.¹⁰⁰

But beneath the incident, which is charmingly related, there emerges for the elder Evelyn Corner a view of life which leads to self-understanding and a knowledge of the process of individualization. For the novel is a prolonged examination of a child's first steps in thinking and recording its reflections. Largely through circumstance, the child is steeped in an emotional atmosphere which acts as a frame of reference for his experience, and from the association between experience and emotional response there emerges an individual, a specific character. Evelyn Corner views his childhood as objectively as possible, and then through intuition realises the force and impact his experiences and

childhood surroundings had in forming him. Cary, through his artistry, is able to communicate the reactions of this self-exploration and to transform what normally would be cold analysis into warm feeling.

Cary often manages to catch the eagerness which possesses a child to know the world about him. The rush and hurry for sensation is presented in a vivid language which gives the impression of immediacy, of life. As Walter Allen notes, he manages to pin down the sense of life at the moment of being lived, even in his first person novels, of which A House of Children is one--novels, which, as fictitious autobiography, must be retrospective. Cary's favourite method of producing this effect, as in the following quotation, is to set a scrap of dialogue in a frame of narrative. Before the dialogue comes a description in past tense of the incidents leading up to conversation, then the dialogue, and then reflection on the experience in terms of the past. The result is an easy transition from past to present and back to past:

Pinto [a tutor] did not teach us. He spent time with us and continued his own life. But that life happened to be one of the imagination. It was he and my father who seized for us, now and then, out of the passing show of things, a sharp picture, a clear experience.

Once, when my father had taken us for a deep-sea bathe, just inside Sandy Point, and we were drying in the boat, he caught me and whirled me round. His

bare arm shot out past my ear: 'See, a whale.'

I gazed across miles of little jumping peaks like circumflexes. Suddenly a thin feather of brightness, like a puff of steam, appeared, all by itself, in the air. It seemed to have no connection with the water below.

'There you are--there he blows off steam--he's ocean bathing, too.'

'Is it hot?'

'Oh, yes, he's as hot as you are inside--hotter.' My father laughed, enjoying my look of astonishment.

But it was the phrase, 'he's ocean bathing, too,' which excited me. I felt the magnificence of sharing bathing places with a whale. We both used an ocean. That whale still lives in my idea with his enormous beating heart and pumping veins, a torpedo of fiery life as big as a mountain, sliding through the small summer waves where we had bathed that morning.¹⁰¹

In the novels of childhood, Cary is approaching the task that he set himself in writing the First Trilogy. He is trying to write artistically first on the nature of the creative process and secondly in terms of the artistic creative process. But the main difference, say, between The Horse's Mouth and A House of Children is that the former deals with a fully formed view of life and an artist's great art, while the latter is concerned with the formation of a view of life and minor, child art. Of greatest interest for the novels of childhood and the First Trilogy is the nature of creation in general, and artistic creation in particular.

In A House of Children Cary, for the first time, begins writing about the fine artist's relation to his work. There is a parallel here with André Gide's Les Faux Monnayeurs where Edouard, who is writing a novel, discusses the art of

the novel. Edouard fails to write a novel which will include both sorts of truth: the truth of life which is different from the truth of the novel. But though Edouard fails, Gide, to some extent succeeds in this aim. Likewise Cary, when he describes children failing horribly in an attempt to produce a play, is able to produce a work of art which at the same time tells about the nature of works of art.

The children, when they are writing their play, feel the force of their intuition, they have the feeling, but they do not realise the problems involved in making others feel in the same way. Like Croce, they assume that their feeling--intuition--is the same as a work of art and will produce the same effect:

These speeches seemed to us the finest things we had ever heard. Even Harry was astonished by them and could hardly believe that he had written them. Kathy and I having put together a few words like 'To die gloriously for honour is better than to live a hundred years and dry up like an old tree,' speeches full of echoes from the Golden Treasury or the Prayer Book, walked about all day murmuring them to ourselves with indescribable delight. For it seemed to us that we were the creators not of words but of sentiments themselves, and that such sentiments, just like those in the Prayer Book or in the great poets, would have an equal effect. Our whole idea was to create an effect. We talked all day of how we should look, what we should wear, and we were convinced that our audience would be astounded by our play.¹⁰²

The play, when finally produced, is a dismal failure:

We were not only ashamed and disappointed; we had suffered a shock. Deeper than the sense of failure, there was the feeling that we had misunderstood the situation; that plays were not so easy as they seemed. With this went, as always, the feeling that life, too, was not so easy as it seemed.¹⁰³

It has been noted above¹⁰⁴ that "the writing of a novel is not only the exploration of a theme, of character, of possibility, but of technical limits." The novels up to and including A House of Children, with the exception of Mister Johnson, are an exploration by Cary of his own powers. Although Cary had worked out his idea of the world before the publishing of Aissa Saved, nonetheless he had to learn still to think in terms of his medium, novelistically, before he had experience enough to produce the great trilogies.

CHAPTER IV THE FIRST TRILOGY: HERSELF SURPRISED,
TO BE A PILGRIM, THE HORSE'S MOUTH

(i) Structure of the Trilogy

The First Trilogy, often known as either the Gulley Jimson Trilogy or Sara Monday Trilogy, is the first of a group of Cary's books which, through his use of first person narration in character, reveal his protean quality.

Herself Surprised is the first novel of the Trilogy

which was designed to show three characters, not only in themselves but as seen by each other. The object was to get a three-dimensional depth and force of character. One character was to speak in each book and describe the other two as seen by that person. Sara, the woman in a woman's world, was to see Wilcher and Jimson in that world, in relation to her own life and her own fortunes. She was to recall their history and the history of the times, as part of her own history.

In practice this scheme, for technical reasons, did not come off.¹⁰⁵

The "technical reason," which resulted in Cary's not being fully successful in his original aim, was that Cary himself became enchanted with his creation, Sara, and that rather than sacrifice her, he preferred to sacrifice the scheme. He explains that the framework of the Trilogy was to be character: the characters of his three leading persons in relation to, or in conflict with each other, other characters, and the character of the times. The books were "to be soaked in character," but it is just because of this that the original

scheme was not effected. For Cary, to fit the scheme that he had first in mind, would have had to make Sara Monday be able to talk of art and history, and it was apparent to him that this went against her essential nature. When faced with the decision, Cary sacrificed the scheme and she remained: "So that Sara's notions of history and art were largely cut out, and Sara was left in her essential; as she sees herself [in Herself Surprised], the victim of mysterious events and her own soft heart; as Wilcher sees her (in To be a Pilgrim), the devoted and unselfish servant and mistress; as Jimson sees her (in The Horse's Mouth), cunning, vain, lecherous, self-deceiving, a man-catcher, whose devotion is a cloak for her secret instinctive and everlasting design to build herself a nest somewhere in the world, even if she has to murder a man's soul to christen the foundations."¹⁰⁶

From Cary's conceptions of creativity there arise several ramifications which, when explored through the eyes of the three main characters of the Trilogy, amount to a prolonged consideration of the human condition, a condition which is the direct result of creativity. The Horse's Mouth, the last book of the First Trilogy, provides the basic metaphysics of the sequence, and through it the three novels are bound together and there emerges a view of life which is so carefully worked out as to be worthy of being called a philosophy of life.

As might be expected, this view of life, now complete and observable in the Trilogy, is partially reflected in the earlier novels. But whereas the early novels are concerned only with particular consequences of creativity, Herself Surprised, To be a Pilgrim and the Horse's Mouth represent a fusion of many varied aspects of life through reference to the theme of creativity. Interestingly enough, it is not until the last book of the group that Cary's general principles take shape or are precipitated from the Trilogy. The other two novels are brought into focus by The Horse's Mouth, and the individual novels, which by themselves demonstrate Cary's mastery of his medium, come together so as to reveal Cary as a philosophical novelist.

Cary has been called, by Frederick Karl, "a minor novelist with the gifts of a major one, a minor humorist lacking the sweeping vision of a major satirist or ironist, a minor artist simply because he remained, for one reason or another, a minor thinker." He continues that "Cary is a good example of a writer whose work, because it derides the mind, ends up one sided and thin."¹⁰⁷ Now this simply is not true. Not when Cary's work, especially the First Trilogy, is read as it was written to be read. Such a statement might be justified if the individual novels of the Trilogy are taken by themselves, but Cary did not intend

them to be taken so. Each one is limited by its narrator's character, but when their interdependence is seen it becomes obvious that Karl has missed the point of the sequence.

As I have remarked, in these novels Cary makes use of first person narration in character, and the First Trilogy, in fact, represents a breakthrough, technically speaking; for Cary was primarily a craftsman and novelist before he was a philosopher and thus always concerned with problems of construction, and the main "problem of construction...is to design a book in which all the characters and incidents form parts of one coherent experience for the judgment, and at the same time to give it the vitality of a narrative from actual life which in itself, of course, has no meaning, or such a confusion of meanings that it adds up to nonsense."¹⁰⁸ [italics mine] The basic weakness of the novel of ideas, which presupposes a multiplicity of viewpoints, is that it encourages the reader to view all things as a meaningless flux, but because the contemporary vision of man and his world as flux is so much a part of the modern mind, the novelist cannot ignore it. In this connection, the main weakness of the novel of ideas is that it fails to capture the type of experience which affects the sensibilities of the reader. In the use of a first person method of narration, Cary found a solution to the problem which faces every writer, that is, the necessity of maintaining an emotional spell so

as to prevent the reader's being jolted out of pure experience into bewilderment or anxious enquiry during the actual process of reading. The writer's intention is to make his reader experience the force of his ideas--he can think about the ideas later--and the presence of the author in the reader's mind, so Cary thought, almost inevitably jolts the reader out of the world of the novel: "...it is my first rule that the reader must not be confused, must not be jolted. I'm told that I have a style, but I am not aware of it. I try only to be clear, to avoid, especially, provoking in the reader ideas which have nothing to do with the theme; above all, to keep out of sight. An author has no more business in a book than the microphone on the screen. It is hard enough for him to give a clear coherent impression without unnecessary distractions."¹⁰⁹ It was in order to avoid intrusion on his part that Cary embarked on the long series of "self-revelations" which is the First Trilogy, and though he was dealing largely with a technical problem, the solution itself has extra-technical significance.

The First Trilogy seems to have presented critics with unusual difficulty. In particular their understanding of Cary's aims in the characterizations of Sara Monday, Tom Wilcher, and Gulley Jimson has been wide of the mark. In view of the fact that Cary considered character of great

importance as a means of presentation, this difficulty on the part of the critics would seem to indicate that he failed in his First Trilogy. However, I do not believe that this is the case.

Actually, Cary is still suffering from the disadvantage common to the original artist who uses his medium in an original way. Frederick Karl cannot understand him because Cary, although superficially old fashioned in adoption of the picaresque form, is trying to do something very new. Now Cary's characters, and the formation of their personalities, represent the various forms in which the fact of creativity manifests itself. And before one can dismiss Cary as a superficial thinker, one must realise the significance of each of his characters in terms of each other and in terms of their relationship with Cary's underlying theme. Now the trilogy form is an inherent part of Cary's meaning: one aspect of the human condition is that man is neither completely an individual, nor completely a social animal, and although each character in his own book regards himself solely from the point of view of the individual, and consequently is wrapped up in his own affairs, when the same character is viewed in someone else's novel, he is viewed, naturally, from a social point of view, in the light of his relationship with the other character. That this is an integral part of Cary's total meaning becomes evident; helped by Lord David Cecil in the broadcast talk printed as "The Novelist at Work," Cary explains himself:

CARY: Now the individual person has a character of feeling...his own set-up, his own mixture, his own--his own complex of personal feelings. Of course, all these personal feelings arise in the first place out of universal nature. He's a bit of universal nature. But as an individual, each man uses his mind and his imagination to create a world satisfactory to himself. That is to say, to satisfy his feelings, his affections, his ambitions, his hopes and fears, his family, and so on; and he has to create--from childhood, because he's isolated. You see, he's free, and therefore he's isolated...

CECIL: And that's really why your books have the particular character I was talking about, because they're somebody who, because he is a human being, is trying to create a universe which suits his feelings.

CARY: Yes.

CECIL: --and that invariably makes him knock-up against other people's idea of what the universe ought to be?

CARY: Quite.110

This, of course, is essentially what happens in the First Trilogy. The three major characters, Sara Monday, Tom Wilcher, and Gulley Jimson represent different ways in which the creative imagination manifests itself.

The main barrier between the critics and Cary seems to lie in his original use of an old technique. Usually the weakness of the first person novel is that ~~by having~~^{when} a central character narrates all the events, there is a certain restriction in the vision of the novel as a whole. Obviously the central character can only know so much, and the impressions that he transmits are automatically distorted by his character, but these distortions are the direct result of his creative imagination. Before any conclusion can be reached concerning

the amount of distortion, the reader has to distinguish between the objective and subjective elements in the central character's story. But in these later novels, the character's view of himself and his narration are subjective, and Cary is never present to point the way.

The reader may well ask why Cary is never present to explain. How is he to understand the novel? The answer is that Cary has provided the reader with all the keys necessary through the invention of Gulley Jimson. This much we can safely learn from him: that the creative imagination is always at work; that every man creates the world in his own image; and that the image created, in addition to reflecting the essential character of the beholder, also tells us about the nature of creativity. However, usually in the novel, characterisation is achieved through a distinction which is made between an "objective stimulus" and a "subjective response." One must know what the character thinks he is responding to so as to realise to what extent the creative principle governs the individual's life and acts and reacts in human relationships; and an objective reality can only be known through examination of that action. And here is the key to the critics' trouble: they have, on the whole, tended to treat the novels of the First Trilogy independently, that is to say without due regard for the other two novels of the sequence. In the separate novels, each character builds his

own world, and if the reader is to gain an understanding of what is reality, that is, the "objective stimulus", in a situation, he has to read all the novels in the sequence before he has a true picture of the situation itself. In this way, reality is defined in part through each character; each character modifies the actual circumstances in terms of his own world, and if people agree with him in his beliefs he is largely a realist. This, obviously, is a relative view of reality, but when man is considered both as an individual and as a social being it becomes evident that this concept of reality plays a basic rôle in the world, and that from it life is defined. Life at large is a chaos of imaginative viewpoints. But in addition to this, there arises the complex problem of evaluating the realism of private intuition of the world and the personal constructions put upon that private intuition, and what may be called social realism. And this leads us back to a conclusion made elsewhere, that the problem treated in all the novels is essentially the same: man's creative powers and the limitations imposed upon those powers by the nature of reality.¹¹¹

In the First Trilogy, the character of the narrator is the informing principle of the individual novels. By his very nature, the central character will select certain events and will relate them, but the point of view of the character

is of central importance, for through his selection of events, and by the different shades of emphasis which he places on them, he will reveal the nature of his creative imagination.

Usually in first person narration, the speaker is the least clear character. But with Cary this is not so: ~~by since~~ ^{is} ~~making~~ the central character entirely subjective, both in his presentation of himself and in his narration of events, ~~the subject of the novel, speaking always in character,~~ ^{he} reveals himself both as an individual and as a representative of a basic type of the creative imagination. The other characters (known also in their own books) only exist as refracted by the imagination of the central figure, and though this is inevitable, it also provides some indication as to the nature of the refractive medium. For this reason, the Trilogy must be approached in much the same way as the memoirs of a group of persons (which is to say their construction of what constituted a particular period), and one must read all the memoirs in order to realise the nature of their constructions and the essential nature of the period they are writing about. Reality, then, as we have seen, depends upon the beholders of a situation, and the corollary to this is that each character's construction of reality relates him to society.

Cary's world in the First Trilogy is essentially one of

feeling. But it is not a world of simple feeling. There is, on the contrary, great complexity, and it is because of this complexity that Cary had to invent three very different characters to relate their own feelings about the world and each other. Each character, in writing or dictating his memoirs, presents his own construction of the world, and his construction (determined by his given nature) is valid within its context; he gives a particular brand of truth--and it is a truth, in Cary's view, although a partial one. The following quotation on the limitations of the novel points out the limitations of the individual works, Herself Surprised, To be a Pilgrim, and The Horse's Mouth, but at the same time, it also indicates what Cary hoped to transcend by using the trilogy form:

It is not valid to charge a writer with falsification because he emphasises one truth rather than another. As for saying that he does not give the whole, that is absurd because the whole truth cannot be known.... The most important part of truth is what humanity is suffering, is feeling and thinking at any moment, and this cannot be known, as a totality, to any person.

.....
So we have the position, a novel has to be a partial view of things. First, because all views are partial and personal, and secondly, because of the limitations of the form of the novel, of which the first and most important is this: that the more comprehensive a novel in scope, in width of scene, the more it loses in power and significance.... The truth given by a novel is in close relation with the power of its expression. It is truth for feeling, it is truth about values. It is a personal truth.¹¹²

Which is to say it is an imaginative truth.

Admittedly the views of Sara Monday on life (which she arrived at through her imagination) are very limited--she is a simple woman, but she is representative. Tom Wilcher's outlook is narrow, though to a lesser extent; being an intelligent and educated man he has an historical perspective; and he too is representative. Gulley Jimson, also, is limited by his essential nature, but his imagination is of a type. However, Cary is not Sara, nor Tom, nor Gulley. These characters, invented by Cary, together serve to transmit some larger intuition of life. And it is just because one character's viewpoint is too narrow that Cary has three. Compare the three viewpoints and there emerges a three dimensional view of life which has both significance and depth. Although Gulley Jimson provides, almost incidentally, the general key which harmonizes all three views, this does not make him Cary. He is still an invention, a part of a larger scheme for working out an idea of life. Indeed, a personal friend of Cary's, Enid Starkie, said that if Cary were like any of his characters, it was Tom Wilcher. Instead, Gulley should be viewed, as he was probably viewed by Cary, as a rather mad old man, but a man who, nonetheless, has some truth in what he says. In other words, Cary's considered view of life must be separated from views of his separate character-novelists before it can be evaluated. By adopting the points of view of three

unlike yet representative types of the creative imagination, Cary has, when their three views are taken together, presented a whole view of life which is remarkable in its intuition of the complexities of human relationships. But this can only be seen by the reader when he takes up each novel one after the other and sees its individual significance in terms of the others. Thus Cary's greatness as a novelist rests upon his intuition of the presence of the creative imagination throughout the fabric of life and his confirmation of that intuition in the creation and exploration of character.

However, the Trilogy emerges as being really too loose to be taken as a complete success because it does not always dramatize the potential conflict between individuals as fully as the trilogy structure permits. In this the novels are unusual, inasmuch as they are, in a sense, two novels: the one read independently of the Trilogy and the one read as part of the trilogy. The significance of Sara Monday's world, if one's view of her^{is} restricted to Herself Surprised, is slight; but with the perspective provided by To be a Pilgrim and The Horse's Mouth the importance of the female imagination in life reasserts itself and, indeed, in the final analysis, its implications cannot be apprehended until the reader has considered the first book in terms of the other two.

The reason why full utilization of the trilogy form was

not made has been already hinted at. Sara, having wooed and won Cary, disrupted his plan. For Sara is structurally the major character throughout, and it is around her that the Trilogy pivots. She is first the mistress of Jimson and then of Wilcher, and it is through this triangle that the imaginative worlds of the latter two are compared. But the two never have any great contact with each other, and much direct conflict is lost. It is only through Sara that they are in juxtaposition at all, and Sara is essentially a very simple person. She is, on the whole, aware of the two men's very different attitudes to her, but the main point of difference between Wilcher and Jimson does not lie in their conceptions of Sara. Their difference is much more fundamental: it is the difference between the conservative and the creative individual; the enslaved man and the free man; in their attitudes to change and the flux of life. But Sara cannot present these differences; she has no awareness at this level; but her comparison of the two men at the level she understands evokes in the reader's mind the other fundamental differences, and from this juxtaposition, which the reader makes for himself, of the three subjective worlds of Sara, Tom and Gulley there arises, though not specifically in the novels, but definitely as a result of the novels, a sort of dynamic tension in the reader's mind concerning the significance and value of each

character's construction of his world as seen in relation to those of the other two. For the characters of the individual novels do not appreciate one another's values; they see only the character, the effect that his values have on character, and they judge the individual in terms of their own values or imaginative worlds. It is the reader who contrasts the different values: it is only he who has the inside information necessary; he knows both the character and his vision of the world, as seen by himself and two other people.

This is the principle of the First Trilogy, and without knowledge of its existence Cary appears as he did to Frederick Karl, a gifted writer but superficial in his thought. For when the First Trilogy is viewed as an integrated work of art, it becomes apparent that Cary's characters are representatives of three irreconcilable forms of the creative imagination which are at large in the world. Despite the fact that they are irreconcilable, they are all, for Cary, essential elements in the world, and his exploration of their significance in the lives of his three characters makes him rather more than "the not so curious phenomenon of an author with tremendous gifts of language and characterization whose point of view hampered his overall writing of novels."¹¹³

Joyce Cary describes the world of the Trilogy as "...my special world, the world of the freeimagination, the permanent creation..." and he continues:

Because we are free creative souls, for ever inventing, achieving, we live in a world of continuous revolution, continuous change.... The personal tragedies of ruined men, superseded business, frustrated artists, can be mitigated by various devices, but the fundamental insecurity, the fundamental conflict cannot be removed. To the free personal soul we owe all love, beauty, everything that makes life worth living; and also the everlasting conflict and insecurity that makes it tragic. Freedom is all our joy and all our pain.¹¹⁴

The view of life as found in the Trilogy may be summarized as follows: in proportion as a man exercises his creative imagination the greater will be his conflict with natural and social restraints, yet if he does not exercise his imagination he has lost the battle by default. In the First Trilogy we have two characters who do exercise their creative imaginations (which are very unlike each other), Sara Monday and Gulley Jimson, and one character, Tom Wilcher, who is afraid of life, but who, as a conservative, also uses his imagination.

(ii) The Horse's Mouth

As I have already remarked above, The Horse's Mouth provides the basic metaphysics of the Trilogy. Gulley Jimson,

the hero of the third book, is at once the most exuberant of the three characters and the most detached. As the violence of the action increases in his novel, Gulley becomes more ironic in his attitude towards his own situation and the situations of those around him. Jimson's eternal truths, which form the basis of his code of ethics, are concerned with the restraints placed on man by his physical limitations and by organized society and, on the other hand, the necessity for expression of his own intensely subjective individualism, if he is to survive at all, despite the dangers of such expression. Jimson, because of his detached, ironic attitude, is able to see the three main characters of the Trilogy and their relationships in a fairly clear light. The only major flaw in his character and his novel is that some confusion arises because at times he seems to speak for his author as well as himself, although Cary does not intend him to do this. Jimson is aided in his formulation of a vision of life which encompasses himself and those around him by his knowledge of William Blake's poetry. By superimposing the whole situation (to the extent that he sees it) upon the structure of Blake's poem, "The Mental Traveller," he creates a system of ideas that will explain the conditions around him in terms of a fallen world. Hazard Adams demonstrates, in his article "Blake and Gulley Jimson: English

Symbolists," the way in which Jimson clarifies the world of the Trilogy so that the significance of the various characters becomes more apparent:

The whole trilogy can be shown to illustrate that cyclical occurrence which Gulley had found in 'The Mental Traveller' and the prophetic books. In Blake's major prophecies, which enlarge upon the pattern of 'The Mental Traveller,' Los the artist or creative spirit, Urizen the aged rationalist or tyrannical preserver of the status quo, and any number of female wills soliloquize at length over their particular troubles. In the first book of the trilogy, Herself Surprised, we have in these terms the soliloquy of a Blakean female will (Sara Monday); in the second, To Be a Pilgrim, the soliloquy of an aged Urizenic figure (Tom Wilcher) looking back occasionally on his days of Orcian radicalism; in the third, the soliloquy of a Los-like figure (Gulley Jimson), who actually demonstrates his visionary ability by superimposing the whole situation upon the structure of Blake's poem. In 'The Mental Traveller,' the female figure is the Blakean 'emanation,' the aged man an Orc grown into Urizen, and the speaker of the poem a Los figure with the visionary capacity to grasp the situation as a whole--as a symbol of the fallen world.¹¹⁵

Yet despite the fact that Jimson does supply so much that is necessary for an understanding of the Trilogy, it would be a mistake to identify him automatically with Cary. When commenting on Herself Surprised, Cary makes it plain that he does not identify himself with his character: "I chose a means of presentation which, because that character was simple and had to be simple, active, unreflective, could not show the character in depth, as aware of itself, or its significance in the world."¹¹⁶ Although Jimson is more

reflective than Sara, it becomes evident that he should not be taken as speaking for Cary any more than it should be assumed that Sara does.

That identification between author and character should not be made is carefully revealed in the book itself. Cary makes Jimson refer repeatedly to his increasingly confused mental state, and these references add to the feeling that some of his actions are too childish and irresponsible to be taken seriously. Likewise, Jimson often comments on the necessity of remaining calm, but seldom does so. In the final scene he is bordering on delirium and is certainly not to be identified with Cary.

However, there is some truth in Jimson's ideas of the objective facts of his world and he is intended to be taken with some degree of seriousness. For despite his nonsense, Jimson's attitude to the life around him is at least as satisfactory as the attitudes of the other more serious characters in the book. For within the theme of the conflict between the individual (which is to say the individual as creative artist) and society, Gulley Jimson does represent the artist. Superficially he follows the pattern of the fictional, modern artist-bohemian--disrespectful, immoral, crazy, irresponsible--but beneath the stereotype of the artist he is the artist, in conflict with society, who stands

alone, faithful to his vision. Underneath the comedy and horseplay, Gulley Jimson, artist, stands faced with the dilemma of the artist in society. Carlyle King's contention that Gulley has no morals ("In high glee he flouts convention, the government, decency, and the Royal Academy; he has no sense of honour, obligation, or justice; he cheats friends and foes with unfeeling partiality.") is simply not true. Sara's view is more just in Herself Surprised when she says, "For what does he get out of it? Nothing but poverty and misery. It must be that he is chosen for it and so we must be right to keep him."¹¹⁷ For Gulley's morality is very demanding. It is the morality imposed by artistic integrity. He knows he could make money if he painted in his old style of the Sara Monday period, but he refuses to compromise his artistic, prophetic vision.

I have already pointed out in Charley is My Darling that farce plays a large part in many of Cary's novels.¹¹⁸ The Horse's Mouth is no exception. With farce there is always injustice. Farce is actually a mockery of tragedy--tragedy without nobility. When a writer produces pure farce, he has to make his action more swift than is necessary in tragedy, and the farcical hero (if this is not a contradiction in terms) meets his nemesis with great rapidity. But in farce, nemesis

itself is not of great importance, and its awe-inspiring qualities are replaced by mere rapidity of approach. In this respect, pure farce is identified with slapstick. Thus in typical slapstick action every small show of presumption or pride--even a mere mistake--is swiftly rewarded by a blow on the head with some handy instrument, such as a frying pan. But even in this pure farce--which is also farce in its lowest form--injustice is the main characteristic. However, this does not mean that all farce is meaningless. When farce is used in subservience to a particular end, as in The Horse's Mouth, to emphasize the essential injustice of life, it can be of deep significance, and may heighten both the tragic and comic aspects of the situation. Used for this purpose, farce indicates both an acceptance of life and a certain nobility of mind on the part of the central character. To soften the harshness of farce, the hero is possessed of a rather ironic view of life and himself. This itself presupposes a certain sensitivity of nature and a degree of self-awareness.

Gulley Jimson, in The Horse's Mouth, is a creator and artistic creation is all his life. But he knows that in a world of everlasting creation there is no justice. He realises that the original artist who expects understanding and reward is going to be disappointed: "He may have the luck to be found out by some wind of chance which blows a sympathetic critical

talent in his direction; he may be admired and rewarded for what he does not do, but for the very reason that he is original, he will, in the ordinary course of things, wait a long time to be understood. For he has to create not only his work but his public."¹¹⁹ Consequently, Gulley proceeds through his memoirs in a farcical manner, but he has his reasons: "Anyone who has served in a war knows the man who is suddenly full of jokes on the night before an attack, even just before going over the top."¹²⁰ Jimson is in the same position. For all his dedication to his art he realises that his only reward may be death in frustration. He is too far ahead of his times and consequently it is his fate to be misunderstood.¹²¹ His only defence is to make a joke of life; he dare not take it seriously. He is afraid that if he does not laugh he will lose either his temper or his nerves. He himself quotes Blake:

The angel that presided at her birth
Said, little creature, born of joy and mirth
Go love without the help of anything on earth.

But all this does not make Cary a novelist with a view of life as farce. Rather, Cary's attitude to Gulley is similar to Gulley's attitude to Blake:

I rubbed a little white into the burnt sienna and
touched it up. While old Billy cried:

And if the babe is born a boy, that is to say, a real
vision

It's given to a woman old
Who nails him down upon a rock
Catches his shrieks in cups of gold.

Which means that some old woman of a blue nose nails
your work of imagination to the rock of law, and why and
what; and submits him to a logical analysis.¹²²

And this favourite quotation of Jimson's underlines the conflict
between the individual and society which is the dominant theme
of the Trilogy.

Gulley, despite the fact that he eventually loses his
battle against society, is the first to admit that there is
sufficient provocation behind the social action which defeats
him. For modern art is dangerous and subversive. To gain
acceptance it first has to break down the accepted vision of the
times and replace it with its own, and then "You never know
what may happen when it's got loose.... Creeping about every-
where, undermining the Church and the State and the Academy
and the Law and marriage and the Government--smashing up
civilization, degenerating the Empire."¹²³

Although the exercise of creative power produces confusion,
conflict and instability--for when man is creative he is always
in opposition to the established order--this is as it should
be, for to live significantly is to live by the imagination.
Gulley, as the original artist, knows that he can never fully
succeed, but through his dedication to art he is willing to

suffer the fate of the original artist:

I didn't say the original artists got encouragement in their own lifetime--that's impossible. What I said was you got an encouraging atmosphere for original art, after the artists are dead. When Van Gogh was painting his masterpieces, the clever ones were beginning to admire Manet--that was very encouraging to Van Gogh, and if it wasn't, what did he care. And when Van Gogh was dead and rotten, and his pictures were being bought at thousands a piece for public galleries so that students could get ideas from them, Matisse and Picasso and Braque were bad jokes, but how encouraging for them to hear Van Gogh who was nearly as mad as they were, appreciated in all the best drawing-rooms. That's what I say (I said) if a government wants original art, great art, it only has to pay a lot of crickets and professors and brokendown screevers to talk Balls about art to a lot of innocent children, and teach them how to draw and paint so badly that their own mothers are ashamed of them; and beg them to go in for something more respectable like selling gold bricks or white slaves. Because they won't leave off. And half of them become like Herod, devoured by worms, and the other half like Job, so rotten in their limbs that they can't find rest anywhere. And the first half go prowling round looking for something to stop up their bellies, and the second half go creeping about on all fours looking for somewhere to rest their miserable carcasses. And so they gather at last in the graveyard and dig up some poor pauper with their teeth and claws and say, 'Lo, he was a genius, starved to death by the government.' And so he may have been. Or perhaps not. Everybody makes mistakes. Even a generation devoured by worms at government expense. But unless you spend millions you don't even get mistakes--you have nothing at all. Just a lot of social economics lying about like army disposal after the war before last or the war after next.¹²⁴

Gulley, then, has resigned himself to failure in his battle, and in The Horse's Mouth, it would appear, judging by his care to show no indignation at the various mutilations of his pictures, that he is more concerned with conceiving works of art in the imagination than with producing a lasting work

which will bring him fame. But in his occasional slips, Gulley reveals that he would like to produce such a work. Sara, in Herself Surprised, realises that this is the case, despite Gulley's attempts at indifference; but Gulley's resilience in the face of destruction remains. This is due to his philosophical opinion that the act of creation is all. The results are not to be thought of. Fairly early in the novel he comes to this conclusion when he opposes Blake's point of view to that of Mister Plant's favourite philosopher, Spinoza. Gulley disagrees with Spinoza who "contemplates" because "contemplation" is on the outside. Unlike Spinoza, Blake aims at freedom, and freedom is nothing but the inside of the outside. The external world (in particular created works of art) is worthy of consideration only insofar as it affects the internal, for the active part of the artist's act of creation involves not mere contemplation, but the introduction of the inside into the outside: "For Jimson, art is above all 'e-motion' in the original meaning of the word: a movement of the soul outwards."¹²⁵ The imagination has to work from within outwards. In Gulley's words

Contemplation, in fact, is ON THE OUTSIDE. It's not on the spot. And the truth is that Spinoza was always on the outside. He didn't understand freedom, and so he didn't understand anything. Because after all, I said to myself, with some excitement, for I saw where all this was leading to. Freedom, to be plain, is nothing but THE INSIDE OF THE OUTSIDE. And even a

philosopher like old Ben can't judge the XXX by eating pint pots. It's the wrong approach.

Whereas Old Bill, that damned Englishman, didn't understand anything else but freedom, and so all his nonsense is full of truth; and even though he may be a bit of an outsider, HIS OUTSIDE IS ON THE INSIDE; and if you want to catch the old mole where he digs, you have to start at the bottom.¹²⁶

Thus we see that intuition is the key to Gulley's art, intuition of something permanent in the world which he attempts to express in his paintings. To be aware of the permanent elements in the world is the artist's reward, to know those elements of life that are permanent because they are continually re-creating themselves.

But what you get on the inside, I said to myself, is the works--it's SOMETHING THAT GOES ON GOING ON. Hold on to that, old boy, I said, for it's the facts of life. It's the ginger in the ginger bread. It's the apple in the dumpling. It's the jump in the OLD MOSQUITO. It's the kick in the old horse. It's the creation. And that's where it's leading me. Right up to that blasted picture of mine.¹²⁷

"Freedom is all our joy and all our pain," and this is true for Jimson. He has his freedom, which, however, alleviates his pain, so that in the last page of the book, after the destruction of his wall and the one picture which has caught his intuition of life and which about the year 2500 would have brought him fame, he is able to chide the nun for being too solemn when he is being taken away in the ambulance. For as Cary says, "Freedom is creation in the act:" and Gulley says

I have been privileged to know some of the noblest walls in England, but happy fortune reserved the best

for my last--the last love of my old age. In form, in surface, in elasticity, in lighting, and in that indefinable something which is, as we all know, the final beauty of a wall, the very essence of its being, Peppernose's wall was the crowning joy of my life. I can never forget the way it took the brush. Yes, boys, I have to thank God for that wall. And all the other walls. They've been good to me. The angel, in fact, that presided at my birth--her name was old Mother Groper or something like that--village midwife. Worn out tart from the sailor's knocking shop. Said, little creature born of joy and mirth. Though I must admit that poor Papa was so distracted with debt and general misery that I daresay he didn't know what he was doing. And poor Mamma, yes, she was glad to give him what she could, if it didn't cost anything and didn't wear out the family clothes. And I daresay she was crying all the time for pity of the poor manny, and herself too. Go love without the help of anything on earth; and that's real horse meat. A man is more independent that way, when he doesn't expect anything for himself. And it's just possible he may avoid getting in a state.¹²⁸

However, despite Gulley's acceptance of the situation in which he finds himself, we should not make light of the tragic consequences of a world in continuous creation. The ironic references to Blake in the above passage make clear the tragic implications of Gulley's life. The irony which is implicit throughout The Horse's Mouth, the best of Cary's picaresque novels, reveals a vision of life which book-reviewers tend to ignore in his writings. In Cary's terms, they emphasize the joy and neglect the pain which must accompany it. Writing in the Saturday Review, Harrison Smith is typical in this respect when he says that "What Joyce Cary has accomplished is to confront and attack the almost universal conviction, which the shock of the First World War and the long

years of the Depression had created, that life was not worth living; to prove the unreality of that twisted fictional world of the last thirty years, inhabited by psychotics, perverts, and gloomy existentialists who flourish on the craving for imaginary thrills of people who have lost their faith in the future."¹²⁹ In a column adjacent to Smith's article, Cary says, "To the free personal soul we owe all love, beauty, everything that makes life worth living; and also the everlasting conflict and insecurity that makes it tragic."

[italics mine]¹³⁰ In fact, Cary is not the sentimental optimist that the book-reviewers would make him, and as Marjorie Ryan says in her interpretation of The Horse's Mouth, that novel's world is really as grim as the world of any other twentieth-century novel.

Gulley moves in a fallen world, he knows it and attempts to make the fall a subject for one of his pictures: "The fall into manhood, into responsibility, into sin. Into freedom. Into wisdom. Into the light and the fire. Everyman his own candle. He sees by his own flame, burning up his own guts."¹³¹ Throughout the last great movement of the novel, from the beginning of Gulley's preoccupation with the Creation, the tragic overtones about the human condition deepen. Slowly, the story of Gulley's sister Jenny, who married an inventor, unfolds until her suicide, and provides a tragic leit-motif

for the major part of the book. Likewise the history of Gulley's father, a painter who, when the style of painting he had evolved went out of fashion, was ruined by the new art form that he never could appreciate. All three characters, Gulley, his sister, and his father, are the victims of the fallen world of creativity. Gulley is too far ahead of his world, his sister was never of it, and his father was overtaken by it. The fate of the creative individual is bound to be tragic. Gulley realises this, and thus he interprets "The Mental Traveller" in terms of a cycle of artistic creation.

One of the tragic aspects of the human condition that emerges in The Horse's Mouth is the essential isolation of the individual. People are free to do as they wish, they are free to create any kind of a world for themselves. However, the system that they evolve obscures any other possible system. Sympathy and affection bring people together: there is communication at that level, but mutual comprehension between human beings at an intellectual level does not exist. Thus Coker--"best friend I ever had"--has no comprehension of Gulley's work as an artist: "'What I think is fifty thousand pounds for a fat totty in her kinsay is a crime. And I wish I had Mr. Hickson in the back kitchen for five minutes with one or two of the girls. Like Nelly Mathers that's got five

under seven and her man run off with a girl in the Pools. Thinks he'll get a prize.' 'That's not a fat totty. It's a picture. It's a work of genius.' 'Yes, a dirty picture, if you ask me. If it was a postcard and some poor chap tried to sell it he'd get fourteen days.'"¹³² Likewise, Coker has no violent objection when her mother takes Gulley's picture of the Fall and tars it over to patch the roof.

Isolation, which is to say non-comprehension, looms larger as a tragic theme as the novel proceeds to its conclusion. One may ask why it is so, or simply wonder at it, as Gulley does--but that is all. Towards the end of the novel, Gulley in the Feathers, after the day's work on the Creation, is attacked by Pepper Pot, a man who is caretaker of the chapel in which Gulley is working and who is not yet used to modern art:

'I don't care,' shouted Pepper Pot, 'I'm not a bum. I put religion before rent. I stop at godless wasters that call themselves artists.' 'Modern artists,' said the seal in a quiet voice, as if he were afraid to find himself so brave. 'Modern artists,' screamed Pepper Pot, foaming like a Bass, 'fakers that can't even draw right and twist up God's works so you wouldn't know them. Blasphemy. Spitting in the face of the Lord.'¹³³

Gulley in the face of the attack can only ask Blake's question softly to himself:

And I saw he hated my guts. It gave me a shock. 'Real artists,' he said. 'They're not by modern artists.' There was nothing to say to that, so I gave him a friendly nod. To wish him luck. The individual seal. In a world

all made of seal. The heart of sealdom.

What the hammer, what the chain
In what furnace was thy brain?
What the anvil? What dread grasp
Dare its deadly terror clasp?

Concentrated seal. Winding like a black tiger through
its own forest, with teeth of china and gold.

When the stars threw down their spears
And watered Heaven with their tears
Did he smile his work to see?
Did he who made the lamb make thee?¹³⁴

But as Gulley suffers, he sees in Snow, the old deaf, castrated cat of the Feathers, a symbol of suffering humanity: "What did she care? She never knew what she was missing. The only individual cat in the world. Universal cat."¹³⁵ and "'She's a character, I can tell you. You can't tell what's going on inside her.'" Gulley answers, characteristically, "'Probably cat,' I said, 'or that's what I should think.'"¹³⁶

(iii) Herself Surprised

From The Horse's Mouth we have learnt what goes on inside Gulley Jimson, but naturally enough we know very little about the other characters, except as they affect Gulley's inner world. However, in Herself Surprised we become familiar with the inner world of another misunderstood individual, Sara Monday.

The superficial resemblance between Sara Monday and Moll Flanders has caused many critics to force a parallel between Cary and Defoe. Cary himself, when speaking of the comparison made between Moll and Sara, says, "I designed Sara as the inveterate nest builder, and I don't think you could imagine anyone further than that from Defoe's old bawd."¹³⁷ But the main difference between Moll Flanders and Herself Surprised arises from the authors' relations to their characters and in their points of view. Defoe's professed morality (he is editing the journals of a woman of notorious character so as to instruct us in the joys of virtue) is pious humbug, and intended to be so taken. As Mark Schorer points out, the actual morality which the novel enforces is the morality of any commercial culture, the belief that virtue pays--in worldly goods. "It is the morality of measurement, and without in the least intending it, Moll Flanders is our classic revelation of the mercantile mind: the morality of measurement, which Defoe has completely neglected to measure. He fails not only to evaluate this material in his announced way, but to evaluate it at all."¹³⁸ Now, as has already been suggested, the character, and consequently the morality, of Sara Monday in Herself Surprised--due to Cary's use of the Trilogy form--is always being evaluated in terms of at least two other systems of values. For Cary has

managed, through technical manipulation, to distance himself from his subject and subject matter, whereas the point of view of Moll is indistinguishable from that of her creator, and Moll Flanders is in actuality not the true chronicle of a disreputable female, but the true allegory of an impoverished soul--Defoe's.¹³⁹

The title of the first novel of the Trilogy, Herself Surprised, includes two meanings concerning the nature of that novel and its central character: primarily, the title refers to Sara Monday's surprise at herself, at what she has done; secondly, it refers to the nature of the novel: the implications are that Sara, being an uncomplicated woman, nevertheless reveals more of her essential nature than she intends and that she is in the midst of a conflict whose larger meaning she is scarcely aware of. In this latter sense, it is implied that we are able to come upon Sara as she really is, and that we can (and are intended to) discover her true identity and her significance in the larger scheme of the Trilogy for ourselves.

In this last respect, Herself Surprised is the most dependent of the three novels on the trilogy form. Unlike Sara's generalisations about Wilcher and Jimson, their statements concerning her are essential if the reader would understand her. For this reason it is necessary to make frequent

allusion to To be a Pilgrim and The Horse's Mouth so as to clarify Sara's self-revelations in Herself Surprised and to relate her to the total statement of the Trilogy.

There are in Herself Surprised two main views of Sara, and these two main views enable Cary to present one of his major sub-themes, namely the dissociation of the created world of the individual from the world of society. The first of these two views is that of the judge and the chaplain. The second view is that of Sara in terms of her own morality, of Sara in life--not when she is talking about herself. From the first point of view, Sara is a criminal and regarded as an anti-social being:

The judge, when he sent me to prison, said that I had behaved like a woman without any moral sense. 'I noticed,' he said, and the paper printed it all, 'that several times during the gravest revelations of her own frauds and ingratitude, Mrs. Monday smiled. She may be ill-educated, as the defence has urged, but she is certainly intelligent. I am forced to conclude that she is another unhappy example of that laxity and contempt for all religious principle and social obligation which threatens to undermine the whole fabric of our civilization.'¹⁴⁰

But beyond the first page of the novel, it soon becomes apparent that this is a book in which one man's sense becomes another man's nonsense, and good and evil are shown as being defined by their contexts and change their nature, depending on whether the context is a social one or that of the private world of the individual. For as the novel progresses there

emerges a view of Sara as an individual constructing her own world about her with appreciation and tolerance, and she becomes, not a threat to society, but rather a representative of that female force which first felt the need of society and which created it and is for ever renewing it.

But these two views with their complex implications are themselves further complicated, since Sara, whenever she does attempt self-analysis and soul-searching, views herself with a social eye, in terms of organized religion and conventional morality.

Sara portrays herself largely out of context. She thinks of herself as a woman trying, however unsuccessfully, to do the right thing. Reading between the lines, we soon realise that she is primarily a female in pursuit of female ends. The least introspective of the three main characters of the Trilogy, she soon shows that what she thinks about herself is not what she feels, and that her thought is never the basis of her actions. Although she judges herself in terms of the Victorian social code and Evangelical religion, as her tale progresses she unconsciously reveals that her real values are those of the hearth and home, and that her conduct is founded on some more basic system of ethics. She acts on the basis of intuition--intellectually she is superficial--but her intuition provides her with an unquestioned

mode of conduct. She is the eternal mother, and this manifests itself in her attitude to her men and in her unceasing energy when she is building her little nests--an activity which provides her with supreme contentment. It is not surprising that in The Horse's Mouth she becomes for Gulley Jimson an embodiment of the earth-mother, the eternal Eve:

Sara was a shot in the arm; she brought you alive one way or another; the very idea of Sara could always make me swear or jump or dance or sweat. Because of her damned independence and hypocrisy. When you knew Sara, you knew womankind, and no one who doesn't know womankind knows anything about the nature of Nature.¹⁴¹

It is probably not going too far to point out that even her name, Monday, is phonetically the same as the Latin Mundi.

It is Gulley Jimson who places Sara in her true position in terms of Cary's view of creativity and in his own terms of artistic creativity. Thinking, as usual, in Blakean terms, he sees her as the old female nature of "The Mental Traveller." Gulley, having been in love with her (he remains so), nonetheless begins to find her stifling and his free creative spirit rebels:

And if the babe is born a boy
He's given to a woman old
Who nails him down upon a rock
Catches his shrieks in cups of gold.

For a while Gulley remains domesticated and respectable:

How I washed and dressed for her, and let her trot
me about like her puggy on a ribbon. It was, 'Poor
Gulley, don't forget your cough medicine. Now darling,

what about your socks. I'm sure they're wet.' And when I was mad to paint, she was for putting me to bed and getting in after me. Stirring all that fire only to cook her own pot. Growing wings on my fancy only to stuff a feather bed.

She binds iron thorns around his head
She pierces both his hands and feet
She cuts his heart out at his side
To make it feel both cold and heat
Her fingers number every nerve
Just as a miser counts his gold
She lives upon his shrieks and cries
And she grows young as he grows old.

Gulley, frustrated in his artistic pursuits, makes the Cary gesture, that is, he punches Sara on the nose.

That was when I did the first sketch of the bath picture, all the bath pictures. I suddenly got hold of the idea. Mastered it. Yes, I can remember the feeling; your brushes like a carpenter's tools. Yes, I found out how to get Sara on the canvas. Some of her, anyhow. And I was always at her, one way or another. The flesh was made word; every day. Till he, that is Gulley Jimson, became a bleeding youth. And she, that is, Sara, becomes a virgin bright.

And he rends up his manacles
And binds her down for his delight
He plants himself in all her nerves
Just like a husbandman his mould
And she becomes his dwelling-place
And garden fruitful seventy fold.

As Billy would say, through generation into regeneration. Materiality, that is, Sara, the old female nature, having attempted to button up the prophetic spirit, that is to say, Gulley Jimson, in her placket-hole, got a bonk on the conk, and was reduced to her proper status, as spiritual fodder.¹⁴²

But Gulley, as his book progresses, realises the power that is Sara. He knows that she works by principles which are lasting and significant ("You might say Sara had some religion,

female religion"), and in his hallucination in which he talks with her, she is made to confess that she has a different code: "Indeed, Gulley, you know I was brought up strict. As my mother said, a girl can't have too many good principles when she's going into service, and goodness knows, when I was a young maid, I had plenty. But I don't know how it is, when you grow old, they get worn out of you, like lumps in a mayonnaise sauce."¹⁴³

Though Gulley places Sara in terms of artistic creation, it is Tom Wilcher who eventually sees Sara as an artist in her own right. Although he does not see in her domestic impulses an aspect of the creative imagination, he realises that she is happy wherever she is because she creates her own world from whatever materials are at hand, and he realises that her shaping force comes from within, that her world is within her. Tom, unlike Jimson and Sara, is possessed of a religious imagination, and he places Sara in his terms: "...her obstinate resolve that others should enjoy what she found good: warmth, food, affection, soft beds, a domestic sensuality about which her religion was like the iron bands nailed to a child's tuck box."¹⁴⁴ For Tom "She is saved." Both Tom and Gulley see in Sara the principle of creation, the eternal, the ability to go on going on.

We have already noted that of importance to the Trilogy is not only what the characters say, but how they say it.¹⁴⁵ Throughout Sara's book there is a basic metaphor of the kitchen. She is essentially the goddess of the hearth, of the domesticating principle, and through Jimson, Sara partly realises this:

Then it came back to me about what poor Jimson had said about my true home being in a kitchen and that I was a born servant in my soul and my heart gave a turn over and I felt the true joy of my life as clear and strong as if the big round clock over the chimney-mouth was ticking inside me. 'So here I am,' I thought, 'mistress of my own world in my own kitchen,' and I looked at the shining steel of the range and the china on the dresser glittering like jewels, and the dish covers, hanging in their row from the big venison one on the left to the little chop one on the right, as beautiful as a row of calendar moons, and the kitchen table scrubbed as white as beef fat and the copper on the dark wall throwing out a glow to warm the heart, and the blue delf bowls like pots of precious balm.

.
You would say I was putting out in buds like a shallot with my big kitchen heart in the middle and my little hearts all round in the empire of those good faithful offices, all fitted up as they were, even the cupboards, in the best of country materials.¹⁴⁶

Further on in the same page she writes, "'Well,' I thought, 'if you tied a knot of all the roads and railways and pipes and wires in the world it would come to a kitchen in the middle of it.'"

This is her life, and Cary, when writing about her in "The Way a Novel Gets Written," says:

As for the moral and aesthetic revolutions which had been tearing other people's worlds to pieces during her whole life, she was scarcely aware of them. Her morals were the elementary morals of a primitive woman, of nature herself, which do not change; and she was supremely indifferent to politics, religion, economics. She was a female artist who was always composing the same work in the same style, but it is a style which does not go out of fashion.¹⁴⁷

So the kitchen and home ^{are} ~~is~~ Sara's manifestation of the creative impulse. Her creativity manifests itself in terms of her lives with three men: Matt Monday, Gulley Jimson, and Tom Wilcher. Matt, her first man and only legal husband, allows Sara complete freedom in her domestic aims. She is able to mother him, run his household, and bear his children. But it is Sara's fate that each of her homes will collapse about her for one reason or another, and when she is thirty-nine (or so she says), Matt dies. After her husband's death she lives with Gulley Jimson, her only love. In comparison with Gulley, Matt Monday is an insignificant character. Consequently, Sara and Gulley are bound to clash sooner or later, for both are powerful, free creative spirits and their modes of creativity are irreconcilable. As long as Gulley is willing to be domesticated all goes well, but as we have seen, he, the artistic, creative spirit, eventually finds her oppressive. Although Gulley and Sara are able to feel together, and their honeymoon at Bournemouth is extremely happy, intellectually they never meet; however, in Herself Surprised, because Sara is essentially unreflective, the theme

of isolation never reaches the tragic significance that it has in The Horse's Mouth. Sara has no conception of art--she can only appreciate Christmas cards--and Gulley refuses to compromise his prophetic, artistic vision and conform to her domestic aims. Once again Sara's carefully constructed nest collapses and once again she sets about making another one, this time with Tom Wilcher.

Sara, if she is in direct conflict with Gulley, serves more as a foil to Wilcher. For again Sara's world is quite different from her man's, and the contrast between their attitudes to life is too great to allow any mutual comprehension at any sort of intellectual level; Sara's world arises from within her, and Wilcher's, as is seen in To be a Pilgrim, does not. Her own nature provides her with unchanging values, and her joy in life, more so even than Gulley's, lies in the act of creation rather than in the end results. Thus at the end of Herself Surprised, despite extended exposure to a social conscience in the form of the chaplain, she remains her essential self, eagerly awaiting her release so as to begin again:

I deserved no less, as the chaplain said, for no one had better chances and more warnings. Neither had my luck left me, for just when I was fretting for our quarter-day at Gulley's and Tommy's bills on top of that, this kind gentleman came from the news agency and offered me a hundred pounds in advance for my story in the newspapers, when I come out. Paid as I like. So that will pay the school bills, at least, till

I'm free, and I've no fear then. A good cook will always find work, even without a character, and can get a new character in twelve months, and better herself, which, God helping me, I shall do, and keep a more watchful eye, next time, on my flesh, now I know it better.¹⁴⁸

Sara claims to know herself for the first time, but in fact she still knows herself no better. In the end is her beginning all over again. She is a representation of eternal creation; she goes on going on.

(iv) To be a Pilgrim

By now, it is obvious to any reader of the First Trilogy that Cary is more interested in the minds of his characters (how they imaginatively construct their worlds) than in their actions. Thus he reveals himself as writing in the twentieth-century tradition of the novel, although many critics have been misled by his use of the picaresque form in Herself Surprised and The Horse's Mouth. It is, however, no surprise that one of the novels of the Trilogy, To be a Pilgrim, is constructed in the tradition begun by Proust.

To be a Pilgrim takes the form of an old man's journal. At times Tom Wilcher writes immediately after an event has taken place, or he may write a few hours later, but in any case his written responses evoke old memories which he constantly interprets in the light of his recent experiences. As in

A House of Children, these reminiscences are not presented in chronological order, but depend upon associations and parallels which may occur between past and present in Wilcher's mind, and as he is forever re-living his past in memory, he presents the past in the continuous present. The main advantage, for Cary, of this means of presentation is that he is able to reveal Wilcher's formulating imagination in action as he makes a pilgrimage which spans his life and reconciles past and present.

To be a Pilgrim, although an essential part of the total meaning of the First Trilogy, is less closely related to the other two novels than they are to each other. The central characters of Herself Surprised and The Horse's Mouth play an almost insignificant part in the action of the novel, though Wilcher's memory of Sara is important because of the symbolism which he attaches to her; he is, on the whole, more concerned with the total significance of the contrast between the past and present generations of Wilchers. But although the other two novels have little effect on the action of To be a Pilgrim, this novel is an inherent part of the Trilogy because its position and theme provide a contrast as well as a moral and historical perspective for the worlds of Sara Monday and Gulley Jimson.

Wilcher is the most introspective of the three main characters of the Trilogy. A conservative by nature, he is profoundly aware that change does not necessarily mean progress, but because he has doubts about the validity of his own emotions in his attitude to the present, and because he is overwhelmed by a sense of failure and frustration in his life, he attempts to discover his true position and worth by writing about the key experiences in his life. As he reviews his life in the terms of his Christian, Protestant imagination and his historical imagination, the tension between the values of the past and present increases until he achieves sufficient faith through the example of others to be himself a pilgrim.

Tom Wilcher sees his life in terms of historical change; not as a cycle of birth, youth, maturity, decline and death, as Sara would see it; nor yet in relation to aesthetic ideas competing with each other, as Gulley views his past; but in terms of an intuition of certain political and religious values. The introduction to Wilcher's inner life is begun in Herself Surprised. Sara, who can only appreciate Wilcher as a man in her woman's world, nonetheless records the following speech:

You believe that we have souls to be saved or ruined and so do I. But you have kept your soul alive and I have nearly smothered mine under law papers and estate business and the cares of the world. Under talk too,

for I talk too much about religion and forget that it is not a matter of words, but faith and works and vision.¹⁴⁹

From Sara's account, we also learn that "Mr. W. loved the old ways" and that he treasures the attitudes of his own generation. But by the time Sara comes into Wilcher's service as his cook, he is old and battered by life. As To be a Pilgrim progresses we learn that he is deep in his own dream, which is mostly of the past, and that as a young man he was a plodding younger brother with strong affections, but no strong ambitions. He becomes a Liberal by conviction, but remains a conservative at heart, the attachments of sentiment being stronger than his drive to adventure. However, through his education and evangelical, protestant upbringing, he knows that history is always turmoil, that he must not become tied to worldly things, and that there is no rest except in the love of God. Wilcher understands all this, but he does not accept it, and so he suffers. Cary, when writing on Tom, says

The tragedy of such a man is that he sees the good for ever being destroyed with the bad; especially that irreplaceable good, those graces and virtues of life that depend on tradition, on example, on that real education which lives only from mind to mind, and cannot be even described in text book, despised by cheap fools or going by default in mere ignorance.¹⁵⁰

In this respect, the title of his novel, To be a Pilgrim, takes on a richness in meaning. First, it indicates Tom's religious upbringing--being the last line of the famous Bunyan hymn:

Who would true valour see
Let him come hither;
One here will constant be,
Come wind, come weather.
There's no discouragement
Shall make him once relent
His first avowed intent
To be a pilgrim.

His evangelical religion, reflected throughout the book by the hymn, acts as a touchstone with which to measure his life as he views it in retrospect. But secondly, the title suggests Tom's struggle to create and accept a new philosophy of life. It almost poses the question--will he indeed give up his old attachments and accept life as it presents itself, in his case, for the love of God.

Tom's pilgrimage begins when his niece, Ann, takes him back to Tolbrook, his childhood home, for a rest-cure. Tolbrook is the only place for Wilcher where there is common ground on which past and present can meet on equal terms. Everything about the house brings up memories from the past, of his childhood and Sara's stay there as cook, but in the presence of his niece and his nephew, Robert, Tom is forced to take into account the present. Thus Tom, when thinking of Sara, reveals his own problem: "She is happy wherever she is--she is saved." Possessing a vivid imagination, Tom, when meditating on his own problems, often has hallucinations, and the first occurs when he hears his sister Lucy whisper a childhood shibboleth, "To be a pilgrim."

"Yes," I thought, "that was the clue to Lucy, to my father, to Sara Jimson, it is the clue to all that English genius which bore them and cherished them, clever and simple. Did not my father say of Tolbrook which he loved so much, 'Not a bad billet,' or 'not a bad camp'; and Sara? Was not her view of life as 'places' as 'situations' the very thought of the wanderer and the very strength of her soul. She put down no roots into the ground; she belonged with the spirit; her goods and possessions were all in her own heart and mind, her skill and courage."¹⁵¹

It is just this quality that is lacking in Tom, and with his usual honesty he admits it:

And is not that the clue to my own failure in life. Possessions have been my curse. I ought to have been a wanderer, too, a free soul. Yes, I was quite right to break off from this place. Although I have loved it, I can never have peace till I leave it.¹⁵²

He concludes "I must go...I must move on--I must be free."

Tolbrook supplies the stimuli for Tom's memory and imagination, and Tom embarks on a long comparison between past and present--a comparison which leads him to discover the essential nature of life and to view life so that past and present are merged into one continuous flow. Eventually he sees the creative and recreative principles as they have been at work in forming his character and his ideal world. This self-knowledge comes largely as a result of his comparisons of his own creative achievements with Sara's creative impulse, and he sees that the best way to live one's life is to relish the creative process, rather than the results of that process. Thinking of Sara, he writes:

'With you I can make a new life, and unless life be made, it is no life. For we are the children of creation, and we cannot escape our fate, which is to live in creating and re-creating. We must renew ourselves or die; we must work even at our joys or they will become burdens; we must make new worlds about us for the old does not last,' etc. 'Those who cling to this world, must be dragged backwards into the womb which is also a grave.

'We are the pilgrims who must sleep every night beneath a new sky, for either we go forward to the new camp, or the whirling earth carries us backwards to one behind. There is no choice but to move, forwards or backwards. Forward to the clean hut, or backward to the old camp, fouled every day by the passers,' etc.¹⁵³

When he thinks of Sara, Tom is a different person who can give theoretical assent to the fact that men must live through creating and re-creating. But he has far to go before he can accept his own life in these terms. Wilcher loves his world for its law and order and for the happiness and liberty which comes from knowing where one stands. Of his nephew and niece (who have to destroy his world, Tolbrook, before they can create it anew) he says, "They cannot understand the virtue of law, of discipline, which is to give that only peace which man can enjoy in this turmoil of a world; peace in his own soul."¹⁵⁴ But his nephew Robert forces Wilcher to examine the process of change by transforming Tolbrook back to a country farm, and in his acceptance of this change Tom reconciles himself to life in the present. Just as Tom feels some secret nerve in him respond to Sara, likewise he responds to his sister Lucy who eloped with the

leader of a protestant, religious sect. "And now I think, 'How did Lucy know at twenty-one, even in her whims, what I don't know till now from all my books, that the way to a satisfying life, a good life, is through an act of faith and courage.'"155 From the example of these two women, Tom learns to accept each day as it comes. He identifies them with the protestant spirit of England and the necessity of creating a new life with each new day. Slowly the creative principle emerges as he explores his relationship with this England and his family:

I, eating breakfast in bed, and always the worst of sailors, feel as if I were at sea, as if England itself were afloat beneath me on its four waves, and making the voyage of its history through a perpetual sea spring.

Faithful to ancient ways, the English crew
Spread old patched sails, to seek for something new.

The monk, in his sleepy routine, who seduced my weakness just now, where is he? A new vigorous generation snatched his peace away; the generation of my ancestors, who made a farmshed of his chapel and bore their half-pagan children in his holy cell. Who once more pulled up England's anchor and set her afloat on the unmapped oceans of the West. Why do I ever forget that the glory of my land is also the secret of youth, to see at every sunrise, a new horizon. Why do I forget that every day is a new landfall in a foreign land, among strangers. For even this Ann, this Robert, are so changed in a single night, that I must learn them again in the morning. And England wakes every day to forty million strangers, to thousands of millions who beat past her, as deaf and blind as the waves. She is the true flying Dutchman.¹⁵⁶

But Tom, true to his essential nature, immediately adds, "but

on the other hand the proper conduct of a ship requires a certain discipline, an order."

Wilcher is a conservative both by nature and because he has a fear of any break in order. It is to some degree as a result of this fear that he treasures all those things which have proved their worth: "'But what I am now I was then. Even as a child I had a passionate love of home, of peace, of that grace and order which alone can give beauty to the lives of men living together, eating, chattering, being sick, foolish and wicked, getting old and ugly. I hated a break of that order. I feared all violence.'"¹⁵⁷ His dilemma is that of all sensitive human beings. He wants to preserve the best that has been produced in this world, but at the same time he realises that for life itself it is necessary to "Be reckless, have faith--take no thought for the morrow--cast your bread upon the waters," that is to say, put the tried aside and create anew. But Wilcher, in his attitude to the need for creativity as a fact of life is different from Lucy, Sara, and Gulley only inasmuch as he faces the problem with reluctance and that he works out his solution in a Christian, Evangelical context. Unlike Sara he is aware of the sacrifice which is involved--she merely accepts the destruction of the old as a prelude for the new--and his acceptance, in Christian terms, reveals the presence

of the creative imagination in Christianity, which is to say that the religious imagination is really yet another aspect of the creative imagination.¹⁵⁸ In the character of Tom, Cary finds confirmation of his view of life in fresh intuition.

The birth of Ann's son, an event that Tom has been looking forward to, brings Tom back to the realities which are of every age, and which are the realities of Sara's life. Characteristically, this revelation is the result of reading family prayers. "They opened for me, if I may speak so, a window upon the landscape of eternity wherein I saw again the forms of things, love and birth and death; change and fall; in their eternal kinds."¹⁵⁹

Tom has already identified himself with Tolbrook, and when under Robert's management the estate becomes once again a productive farm, and when Ann's son is born, he recognizes in this a cycle of regeneration and an image of England. But the old triumphs and perfections have to be sacrificed in the interests of the new creation, and Tolbrook's architectural gem, the Adam's room, which symbolises the ideal past for Tom, is ruined when Robert uses it as a store-room for a threshing machine. Although Tom realises now that a new creative cycle is beginning, as yet he cannot reconcile himself to it:

This place is so doused in memory that only to breathe makes me dream like an opium eater. Like one who has taken a narcotic, I have lived among fantastic loves and purposes. The shape of a field, the turn of a lane, have had the power to move me as if they were my children, and I had made them. I have wished immortal life for them, though they were even more transient appearances than human beings.¹⁶⁰

But nonetheless he has the fortitude to encourage Robert:

"It is as if Tolbrook itself were on a pilgrimage.... It is like a gypsy van, carrying its people with it."¹⁶¹

But Tom remains unreconciled to these changes until almost the end of his journal, and when Sara Monday is eventually released from prison he runs away from Tolbrook in order to marry her. But this would be merely an evasion of his emotional problem and no solution. As it happens, Sara realises that he needs special care (and besides she is already in possession of a "nest"), so she informs Ann and Robert of his plans. When Tom returns to Tolbrook, his last route of escape is closed. Before he became familiar with Sara he had escaped from the present by living in the past. When the past collapsed about him, he dreamed of creating its facsimile in the future with Sara. But Sara, by returning him to the care of Ann and Robert, has prevented an escape into the future. He has but one memory left--of Amy, his brother Bill's wife, a woman much like Sara--but this memory contains no delusion or refuge. Amy lived always in the present: "Amy and Sara, countrywomen both. They didn't

submit themselves to any belief. They used it. They made it. They had the courage of the simple, which is not to be surprised. They had the penetration of innocence which can see the force of a platitude."¹⁶²

Tom becomes reconciled to the present, to the necessity of change, to destruction as a prelude to creation, and like Jimson he learns before he dies to appreciate that which goes on going on. At the same time he gains full self-knowledge:

For the truth is, I have always been a lover rather than a doer; I have lived in dreams rather than acts; and like all lovers, I have lived in terror of change to what I love. Time itself has haunted my marriage bed like a ghost of despair. And on the day when I possessed Tolbrook, my keenest fears began. It was not till I was a pillar of the old order, that I felt how the ground trembled under my feet; how close beneath the solid-looking stone was the primitive bog.¹⁶³

In the end, as Walter Allen says, the Nonconformist, Protestant spirit, which is one aspect of the creative imagination that eternally shapes things anew, is equated with the spirit of England herself:

The truth must be confessed, that I am an old fossil, and that I have deceived myself about my abilities. I thought I could be an adventurer...a missionary. I shouted the pilgrim's cry, democracy, liberty, and so forth, but I was a pilgrim only by race. England took me with her on a few stages of her journey. Because she could not help it. She, poor thing, was born upon the road, and lives in such a dust of travel that she never knows where she is.

'Where away England, steersman answer me?
We cannot tell. For we are all at sea.'

She is the wandering Dutchman, the pilgrim and scape-

goat of the world. Which flings its sins upon her as the old world heaped its sins upon the friars. Her lot is that of all courage, all enterprise; to be hated and abused by the parasite. But, and this has been one of the exasperating things in my life, she isn't even aware of this hatred and jealousy which surrounds her and, in the same moment, seeks and dreads her ruin. She doesn't notice it because she looks forward to the road. Because she is free. She stands always before all possibility, and that is the youth of the spirit. It is the life of the faithful who say, 'I am ready. Anywhere at any time.' 164

Cary emerges from the First Trilogy as a philosophical novelist--as opposed to a philosophising novelist. His primary intuition, that the principle^{al} fact of life is the free mind, which for good and evil produces a world in continuous creation and therefore continuous change and insecurity, is confirmed and explored through his creation of character. As a direct result of this primary intuition there arises a moral dilemma which he investigates in the persons of Sara Monday, Gulley Jimson and Tom Wilcher. These three live by three separate codes of ethics, and each code is justifiable in its context. Sara Monday represents a natural morality; Tom Wilcher the claims of a conservative society; while Gulley Jimson embodies the code of the creative artist, who, if he is to survive at all, can be true only to his own essential spirit.

The key to the whole structure of the Trilogy, that is to say the relationship of the three characters, is found in

Cary's theory of the creative imagination as elucidated by Jimson. Cary does not have any simple answer to the problem posed. Each approach to life, each claim of his three characters is not only valid within its context, but from a social point of view the values represented by these three are necessary for the well-being of society. His answer, which is implicit in the Trilogy, takes the form of a plea for the imagination. In society the individual has to use his imagination to evaluate the validity of the claims of the different individuals involved in any given situation. The first corollary is that only the individual possesses an imagination and that society is not to be regarded as an entity itself, but rather as a "collection" of individuals. I believe that Cary's value as a novelist becomes apparent when his work is considered in terms of his view of the creative imagination and the position of the individual in society.

CHAPTER V THE SECOND TRILOGY: PRISONER
OF GRACE, EXCEPT THE LORD, NOT HONOUR MORE

Joyce Cary's Second Trilogy will by its very nature appear somewhat repetitious and therefore anticlimactic in its treatment here. The reasons for this are first its structure, and second its theme. However, although its subject matter is not new, the Trilogy itself, as a confirmation and re-exploration of Cary's primary intuition of the creative imagination, is, in the words of Elizabeth R. Bettman, "...as accomplished and whole a piece of fiction as anything we can point to today...."¹⁶⁵

The Second Trilogy utilizes essentially the same principles and method that Cary evolved for his First Trilogy.¹⁶⁶ However, the structure of the Second Trilogy represents an improvement on that of the First Trilogy because the worlds of the three main characters, Nina Nimmo (afterwards Latter), Chester Nimmo, and Jim Latter, are more closely interlocked by a single subject, politics. As in the First Trilogy, the worlds of the two men are brought into conflict by the central female character, in this case Nina; but unlike the First Trilogy, the two men, Chester Nimmo and Jim Latter, in addition to their conflict over Nina, are in collision because of their differing political ideas. Although politics is the subject

of the Trilogy, nonetheless the Trilogy is not, as some early reviewers thought, supposed to be an historical account of the politics of the early part of this century. Rather, the Trilogy is an intuitive exploration of the creative imagination at work, for good or evil, in the realm of politics.

Each of the three volumes of the Trilogy has its reason for being written. Nina in Prisoner of Grace is defending both Nimmo and herself against attacks made in the press. Chester Nimmo in Except the Lord is writing an apology for his life. His book deals with his early boyhood and ends on the threshold of his political career. In Except the Lord the reader discovers the motivation behind Chester's political career and an implicit plea for an understanding of the man himself. Jim Latter, the "author" of Not Honour More, is going to be hanged for the murder (he calls it an execution) of his wife, and dictates to "policewoman Martin" in order to explain that he acted in the interests of decency and justice.

The three novels follow a chronological order within themselves, but the Trilogy itself does not. The second volume, Chester Nimmo's Except the Lord, deals with the earliest "historical events" of the sequence; the first volume, Nina's Prisoner of Grace, is concerned with the period covering Chester's political career, while the climax

of all three volumes is found in Jim Latter's Not Honour More, which continues where Prisoner of Grace ends. The close relation in time between the first and third volumes of the Trilogy is emphasized by Nina's writing at the end of her volume "Jim can only shoot me dead," and Jim's opening sentence "This is my statement, so help me God, as I hope to be hung."

The dominating personality of the Trilogy is that of Chester Nimmo, the great Liberal politician. In him we recognize the Cary hero, the man of imagination and prophetic vision. In this respect, Nimmo occupies in his Trilogy the same position as Gulley Jimson holds in the First Trilogy. However, as a man with political foresight and vision he is a larger and more complex version of Monkey Bewsher, who appears in Cary's other novel of politics and government, An American Visitor. A man possessing a powerful, creative imagination, Nimmo, naturally, is of first interest to this study. The Trilogy itself, indeed, serves only to provide three very different views of this man in his rôle of politician. It is not surprising that even at the end of the Trilogy Nimmo remains something of an enigma. "Paralleling the rise of the Liberal party and the growth of the trade-union movement, his career coincided with a period which comes as close to class warfare as any in British history, and in this period,

under Cary's hand, Nimmo the spellbinder springs to life in all the complexity of his dual nature--the rabble-rousing agitator and the revivalist preacher."¹⁶⁷

Just as Gulley Jimson in the First Trilogy represents the artist in society, so Chester Nimmo (an artist in his own right) represents the politician--at home, in society, and in government. Our first introduction to him is in Prisoner of Grace where he is seen with the refracted vision of his wife, Nina. Nina, having been seduced by Jim Latter, her cousin, married Chester in order to avoid a scandal, and as a result of this marriage Chester was provided with enough capital to begin his political career. From the beginning of her marriage to Chester, Nina finds herself in a "political" atmosphere. Her husband, a product of the lower classes, first shocks her with his evangelical religion and then identifies her with "privilege" and the upper classes. Thus, even in her woman's world, Nina has to be politically minded, for "...all Chester's feelings and energies seemed to run into each other; his religion stirred up his politics and his politics stirred up his religion, and both of them stirred up his affections and his imagination, and his imagination kept everything else in a perpetual turmoil."¹⁶⁸ Very early in the novel, she remarks, "I was soon to understand what Balzac or perhaps it was what Vauvenargues meant by calling

matrimony a political education."¹⁶⁹

It is apparent from Prisoner of Grace that Chester views himself as a man of destiny, entrusted by God and the Liberal party with a mission--to govern England according to his evangelical lights. However, as has been seen, there is a basic lack of sympathy between Nina and Chester, first because of his religion and class prejudices and second because she is still in love with Jim. Nonetheless, she is, as the title of her novel suggests, a prisoner of grace, since she feels obligated to serve Chester because of his sincere belief in his career. As she puts it:

I said once that I had always been afraid of hating Chester, because for me it would have been so easy. It is torture to feel that someone is really evil and is 'getting away with it'--it is so frightening. It makes one feel so insecure--as if there were no real goodness in the world--as if any happiness one seems to possess is just an accident--like the child's who was not crushed with its brothers and sisters when a house collapsed in Tarbiton, because it happened to be playing under the kitchen table.¹⁷⁰

Nina finds herself living in a world of divided claims, and the result of this situation is that her statements are full of qualifications and parentheses and she develops what Cary calls her "brackety mind." However, because of this, she is, to the extent of her knowledge of the man, reliable in her presentation and analysis of Chester at the height of his political career. Yet, as Nina's account progresses, it appears to the reader (although not to Nina) that there is

a growing breach between Chester's ideals and his methods of realising them.

In Prisoner of Grace the line between moral and immoral behaviour is always very indistinct. Chester, as Nina understands, is a dedicated being, and she knows how much "'devotion' meant to a man who was himself 'devoted'--not even to a human being but to something that seemed to his imagination (which had done so much to create it) infinitely more beautiful and worthy--the Cause."¹⁷¹ However, Chester's attempts to remain in power (for his cause) result in Nina's temporary uncertainty as to whether Chester's end justifies his means. But his old party supporters condemn him when he completely changes his policy and drops the Liberal pacifist platform just before the war of 1914-18. During the war there is no doubt that he devotes himself to the best interests of the country, but in the post-war election Chester is forced out of office and vilified by both his party and the press as a member of the war cabinet. But by now, "It was impossible any longer to reach him. He had...made such devastation round himself that to talk to him at all was like calling across a waste full of broken walls and rusty wire and swamps of poisoned water...."¹⁷² Before the end of the volume, Nina relates that she left Chester in order to marry Jim; however she continues to "believe" in Chester--although she cannot bear to live with him.

The popular charge brought against Nimmo by the press is contained in the following attack by Mr. Round, an ex-supporter of Nimmo:

'We need not waste pity on the fate of Lord Nimmo. I say with all due respect for the meaning of my words that this man, so early corrupted--this evil man--was one of the chief architects of our destruction. Not content with selling his personal honor for power and cash, he left nothing undone to destroy the very soul of our great cause. And we see the consequences today in the final divorce of politics and morality--the universal collapse of Christian values--materialism rampant and unashamed--the naked pursuit of gain by all conditions of men--the philosophy of grab which dominates all programs.'¹⁷³

It is against charges such as these, and the charge that she corrupted him by her extravagance, that Nina is defending Chester. Although Nimmo alienates her by his treatment of his old friends, nonetheless she realises that Chester, living in politics, has been continually fighting for his life:

"Politics, after all, is a kind of war (and in many places they still shoot or even torture the defeated), and people who are fighting for their lives (at least their political lives) have quite a different view of things from those who only work and eat for them."¹⁷⁴

Nina's charity--in the Pauline sense of the word--makes her Chester's prisoner. When all things are considered, she believes that he (and his imagination) have a lot to answer for, but on the other hand, under the circumstances, he has done as well as is possible:

But what I'm trying to show is that no one has a right to hate Chester. After all, people who say they don't want much from life--only ordinary peace and quiet--are really asking...a great deal. For the ordinary thing is more like a violent argument about the right road in a runaway coach (like our local coaches) galloping downhill in a fog. If no one drives (and chooses a road) everything and everyone, including the horses, will crash.¹⁷⁵

Nina, from her world, makes those fine distinctions which generally are not made concerning politicians. She herself is able to view politics as it really is without letting the very word itself blind her--as it does, say, Jim Latter in Not Honour More. Consequently, Nina is angry when an Oxford student implies that Chester was "crooked" and "got away with it."

I was so angry with her that I would have accused her of being shallow and cheap, if I had not realized that in other respects she was a very warmhearted and honest creature, and only silly (like so many others--clever or not) about 'politicians'; as if they were naturally wicked because they have to 'manage' people. But I'd like to know what would happen if nobody tried to manage people, if mothers always told the facts to children (saying to the stupid ones that they were stupid) and never took any consideration for their nerves and their fits of temper and frights and silliness.

And what I am trying to do in this book is not to make out that Chester was a saint (which would be stupid, after all the books and articles about him) but to show that he was, in spite of the books, a 'good man'--I mean (and it is saying more than could be said of most people) as good as he could be in his special circumstances, and better than many were in much easier ones.

I really think that politicians (I mean good honest ones who have good principles) can be more admirable than saints, because they do far more difficult work and are not allowed just to 'save their souls.'¹⁷⁶

Chester, as Nina knows, is forced by the very nature of his job to appear deceptive.

...anyone knows that the noblest men have thought it right to be careful of how much they tell. Nobody, for instance, would say to a country at a critical moment, 'You have no army and no proper defenses,' because it might stop it trying to defend itself. It's no good, in fact, pretending that there is any easy way to solve political questions, because they are all so mixed up with feelings and prejudices that people have to be persuaded and induced to do and think rightly (unless you just shoot them, which is impossible in a democracy).¹⁷⁷

Nina understands that Chester uses his religion and principles for his best advantage whenever he is in difficulties, but she also believes that he never quite loses his integrity:

The truth is that a man like Chester, just because he had such a lot of imagination, such power of putting himself in other people's places and minds, was nearly always sincere...Chester needed always to believe what he took up, he needed to be sincere, for if he had any doubts he could not 'put himself over' with effect. Sincerity (as he well knew) was the secret of his power as a speaker; all those sudden 'virtuoso' changes of voice, and similes and inspired gestures were the direct result (as, I suppose, in most great preachers and saints) of a 'burning' conviction.¹⁷⁸

In Nina's view Chester and his cause are both political, and consequently he has to be able to manoeuvre for the most favourable position: "But this is only to say that to a man like Chester, whose politics were mixed up with religion and whose religion was always getting into his politics, this was the situation which he was accustomed to 'handle.'

It did not prevent his religion from being 'true' that he knew how to 'use' it."¹⁷⁹

As Elizabeth R. Bettman notes in her study of the Political Trilogy "To give the feel of a man like Nimmo, to whom the lingo of politics was as natural as the air he breathed, Cary had to incorporate into the fabric of his narrative the jingoism of political speech."¹⁸⁰ Thus the second volume of the Trilogy reads like an evangelical church sermon and an election speech. Except the Lord reveals the life of Chester Nimmo the boy and the young man, and at the same time gives the reader insight into the idealism which motivated Nimmo's political career. Brought up in a religious household (his father was an evangelical lay-preacher), Chester is thrown into turmoil by the condition of the lower classes, and having lost his faith (the word of God had become a suspicious rigamarole designed to keep the poor poor) he becomes first a unionist and then a Marxist. However, while acting on a strike committee, he is brought face to face with violence, and when he protests the union's action, he is literally thrown out by his comrades. From this point on in his life he attempts to avoid physical violence at all costs and to rely solely on his powers of persuasion, or as Jim Latter in Not Honour More calls it, "wangling."

Chester's awareness of the power of the spoken word is

at once his greatest asset and his greatest liability. In Art and Reality, Cary says "As for the great preachers, the orators, no one need doubt their power for good and evil. Wesley probably saved Britain a revolution of violence, Hitler wrecked Europe."¹⁸¹ For Chester the truth of this statement was brought home in a play at a country fair:

For me the actor revealed a fearful, an astonishing power--one that entranced my boy's soul not only by its imposing solitary glory, but perhaps even more profoundly by its defiance. And this was a power that could be achieved by anyone with the will and a voice, anyone capable of learning this art of stringing words together in poetic form, and striking the right attitudes.¹⁸²

Chester learns not only to sway others, but to carry himself away by the artistry of his words. "The piety and saintliness of Nimmo's father, reinforced by poverty and adversity, strikes an implied contrast with Nimmo's wordly selfishness. The stubborn steadfastness of the saint, the upright fearlessness of the man who walks with God, is set by implication against Nimmo's too facile accommodation to the exigencies of reality."¹⁸³

It would appear that Chester's conscience, as Nina almost thinks in Prisoner of Grace, is unable to force him to inexpedient political action. "The boy who learned from his father that 'One does not fear God because he is terrible, but because he is literally the soul of goodness and truth, because to do him wrong is to do wrong to some mysterious

part of oneself,' develops into a man whose prayers for deliverance from 'the lie in the soul' have a distinctly hollow ring."¹⁸⁴

It seems to the reader, from the evidence that accumulates both in Prisoner of Grace and Not Honour More, that in fact Chester's religion, despite the pious ring of Except the Lord, is virtually meaningless for him. If this is so, the title of his book has an ironic significance in the light of all the three volumes of the Trilogy. "Except the Lord build the house, their labour is but in vain," reads the psalm. Does Chester merely "strike the right attitude" in Except the Lord--or does he see how the psalm applies to him?

In Not Honour More we meet Nimmo's political opposite, and Cary contrasts the politician with the authoritarian. Jim relates in his volume the climax of Chester Nimmo's political career and its end with the deaths of Nina (now Jim's wife) and Chester (in a w.c.). Chester once again takes up his rôle of the great English statesman who is called upon to save his country in her hour of need, but his struggle for power in a period of class tensions degenerates into intrigue, broken promises, and loss of honour. The volume begins with Jim's discovery that Nina has been unfaithful to him with Chester and an attempt by Jim to murder Chester. However, Nimmo is recalled to office during the general strike,

and Jim is prevented from taking further action. However, when he discovers that they have betrayed a constable working under him in the strike in order to avoid a political crisis ("You've sold Maufe to the mob. You've made an example and put yourself right with the gang of gimme-boys and commies..."),¹⁸⁵ Jim decides to kill them both "Because of the rottenness. Because of the corruption. Because all loyalty was a laugh and there was no more trust. Because marriage was turned into a skin game out of a nice time by safety first. Because of the word made dirt by hypocrites and cowards. Because there was no truth or justice anywhere any more. Because of the grabbers and tapeworms who were sucking the soul out of England."¹⁸⁶

Despite his apparent sincerity, Jim's life--just as much as Chester's--is a lie. He says that Nimmo "...corrupted everything and everybody that came near him and stole this woman, my wife, from me when she was little more than a child and set to work to destroy her body and soul. He wanted her money to get into what he called politics, which was stirring up hatred and envy and making promises he knew would never be fulfilled, and when he caught her he proceeded to rob and terrify her into his slave."¹⁸⁷ However, we know from Prisoner of Grace that Jim got Nina into trouble and then was too concerned with his own army career to marry her. Chester

proved to be a happy providence for the Latter family. Nonetheless, Jim never admits this, because if he did, all his "honour" would be a farce, and this "honour" is all that he has left, having otherwise made a failure of his life. For Jim is essentially the selfish, unimaginative public schoolman who still has not faced reality.

In many ways Jim resembles Marie Hasluck in An American Visitor especially in his belief in "the Noble Savage". He was hounded out of the African Service for trying to "protect" his people, the Lugas, from the government policy of "what they called civilization but is really materialism and general European degeneracy." Unlike Bewsher of that novel, he has no political sense, but rather he is a "simple-lifer who wants to live like Thoreau and put off the corruption of the world."¹⁸⁸ He says "My whole case is this, that if a man or country gives up the truth, the absolute truth, they are throwing away the anchor and drifting slowly but surely to destruction. I say nothing can save but truth and the guts to take it. For truth will always prevail."¹⁸⁹

Yet despite his sincerity in the face of public corruption, Jim is just as culpable as Chester. For in his unimaginative dedication to truth, Jim too can be regarded as being immoral. Impervious to any other point of view but his own and sickened by political intrigue, Jim is willing to take justice into his own hands. He justifies his action in terms of Lovelace's

code, but cannot even see the irony of the lines in their new context. Jim's comments on Nimmo's political corruption become themselves ironic because of his limited, unimaginative approach to politics. There is no doubt that Jim acts in terms of a double standard; the destruction of one life by criminal pride or folly in the name of truth is obviously as unjustifiable as Chester's betrayal of constable Maufe.

It becomes evident that both Chester and Jim have a double standard of morality: Jim is honest in his public life, but dishonest in his private life; Chester, on the other hand, is unscrupulous in his public life, however conscientious he may be as a private individual. Cary's proposition would appear to be that dishonesty in any form corrupts and that a double standard of morality in politics can never serve "as a valid motive or excuse for political action."¹⁹⁰

There remains still the question of Chester Nimmo's complex personality. Is he, as Nina presents him, "as good as he could be in his special circumstances, and better than many were in much easier ones"? Or is he merely the crook that Jim Latter sees? Or is he after all a man forever on the verge of losing his integrity and saved only by his free imagination and his Protestant faith in man's personal relation to God?

Cary's answer is in political terms:

'What I believe is what Nimmo believes, that wangle is inevitable in the modern state, that is to say, there is no choice between persuading people and shooting them. But it was not my job to state a thesis in a novel, my business was to show individual minds in action and the kind of world they produce and the political and aesthetic and moral problems of such a world. In short (in the trilogy), the political situation as I conceive it in my world of the creative free individual.¹⁹¹

FOOTNOTES

- ¹Andrew Wright, Joyce Cary: A Preface to his Novels (London: Chatto & Windus, 1958), p. 22. I am indebted to Andrew Wright for the following biographical information.
- ²Joyce Cary, Memoir of the Bobotes (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1960).
- ³Wright, op. cit., p. 24.
- ⁴M. M. Mahood, "Joyce Cary in Africa," New Statesman (weekend review), LX, mdxlii, 477.
- ⁵Idem. Miss Mahood has two spellings: "Nefada" and "Nafada".
- ⁶Idem. One of Cary's letters to his wife, quoted by Miss Mahood.
- ⁷Idem.
- ⁸Idem.
- ⁹Ibid., p. 478.
- ¹⁰Joyce Cary, Power in Men (London: Nicholson and Watson, 1939), p. 1.
- ¹¹Ibid., p. 7.
- ¹²Joyce Cary, Art and Reality (Cambridge: The University Press, 1958), p. 105.
- ¹³[An Interview with Joyce Cary], Writers at Work: The Paris Review Interviews, ed. Malcolm Cowley (New York: Viking, 1958), p. 55.
- ¹⁴Idem.
- ¹⁵Cary, Art and Reality, p. 11.
- ¹⁶Ibid., p. 24.
- ¹⁷"A Conversation with Joyce Cary" (Nathan Cohen), The Tamarack Review, No. 3, p. 15.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 12.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 15.

²⁰Joyce Cary, "On the Function of the Novelist," New York Times Book Review, October 30, 1949, p. 52.

²¹Cary, Art and Reality, p. 85.

²²Ibid., pp. 85-86.

²³Ibid., pp. 96-97.

²⁴Ibid., p. 87.

²⁵Joyce Cary, "My First Novel," The Listener, April 16, 1953, p. 637.

²⁶Joyce Cary, Aissa Saved (London: Michael Joseph, 1952), Preface, p. 8.

²⁷Cary, "My First Novel," p. 637.

²⁸Cary, Aissa Saved, Preface, p. 8.

²⁹Cary, Art and Reality, pp. 9-10.

³⁰Cary, Aissa Saved, Preface, p. 8.

³¹Ibid., pp. 25-26.

³²Ibid., p. 39.

³³Ibid., p. 117.

³⁴Ibid., p. 48.

³⁵Ibid., p. 47.

³⁶Ibid., pp. 55-56.

³⁷Ibid., p. 57.

³⁸Idem.

³⁹Ibid., pp. 97-99, et passim.

⁴⁰Ibid., pp. 211-212.

⁴¹Joyce Cary, An American Visitor (London: Michael Joseph, 1952), p. 150.

⁴²Joyce Cary, "My First Novel," The Listener, XLIX, mcclix, p. 638.

⁴³Idem.

⁴⁴Joyce Cary, American Visitor, pp. 234-236.

⁴⁵Ibid., p. 92.

⁴⁶Ibid., p. 9.

⁴⁷Idem.

⁴⁸Ibid., p. 10.

⁴⁹Ibid., p. 9.

⁵⁰Ibid., p. 10.

⁵¹Ibid., p. 11.

⁵²Warren G. French, "Joyce Cary's American Rover Girl," Texas Studies in Literature and Language, II, iii, 282.

⁵³Cary, American Visitor, p. 22.

⁵⁴Ibid., p. 66.

⁵⁵Ibid., p. 89.

- ⁵⁶Ibid., p. 90.
- ⁵⁷Ibid., pp. 91-92.
- ⁵⁸Ibid., p. 133.
- ⁵⁹Ibid., p. 121.
- ⁶⁰Idem.
- ⁶¹Ibid., p. 136.
- ⁶²Ibid., p. 150.
- ⁶³Ibid., p. 168.
- ⁶⁴Ibid., pp. 193-194.
- ⁶⁵Ibid., p. 215.
- ⁶⁶Ibid., p. 220.
- ⁶⁷Ibid., pp. 223-224.
- ⁶⁸Ibid., p. 232.
- ⁶⁹Warren French, "Rover Girl," p. 290.
- ⁷⁰See above p. 7.
- ⁷¹Max Cosman, "The Protean Joyce Cary," Commonweal, March 6, 1959, p. 597.
- ⁷²Joyce Cary, The African Witch (London: Michael Joseph, 1951), Preface, p. 10.
- ⁷³Arnold Kettle, An Introduction to the English Novel, II (London: Hutchinson University Library, 1953), p. 179.
- ⁷⁴Wright, Joyce Cary, p. 85.

- ⁷⁵Frederick Karl, "Joyce Cary: The Moralist as Novelist," Twentieth Century Literature, V, iv, 189.
- ⁷⁶Idem.
- ⁷⁷Joyce Cary, Mister Johnson (New York: Harper, 1951), p. 117.
- ⁷⁸Ibid., p. 2.
- ⁷⁹Ibid., p. 7.
- ⁸⁰Ibid., p. 109.
- ⁸¹Ibid., pp. 163-164.
- ⁸²Ibid., p. 257, (Preface to Carfax edition).
- ⁸³Ibid., p. 29.
- ⁸⁴Walter Allen, Joyce Cary (London: Longmans, Green, 1953), pp. 9-10.
- ⁸⁵Cary, Aissa Saved, p. 47.
- ⁸⁶Cary, Mister Johnson, pp. 252-253.
- ⁸⁷See above p. 7.
- ⁸⁸Joyce Cary, "Speaking of Books," New York Times Book Review, June 26, 1955, p. 2.
- ⁸⁹Joyce Cary, Charley is My Darling (London: Michael Joseph, 1951), Preface, p. 8.
- ⁹⁰Ibid., p. 9.
- ⁹¹Ibid., pp. 9-10.
- ⁹²Ibid., p. 100.

⁹³Ibid., p. 162.

⁹⁴See below for another discussion of farce in Cary's novels, p. 88, et. seq.

⁹⁵Cary, op. cit., p. 303.

⁹⁶Ibid., pp. 144-145.

⁹⁷Wright, Joyce Cary, p. 46.

⁹⁸Joyce Cary, A House of Children (New York: Harper, 1956), pp. 68-69.

⁹⁹However, Walter Allen views Cary's generalizations as a legitimate means of creating character. P. 16, op. cit.:

Generalization is part of Cary's way of creating character and giving it significance. Yet we never feel his generalizations as shocking intrusions on the action as we do the moral judgements of Thackeray or, at times, George Eliot.

¹⁰⁰Joyce Cary, "Important Authors of the Fall, Speaking for Themselves," New York Herald-Tribune Book Review, October 8, 1950, p. 10.

¹⁰¹Cary, House of Children, pp. 3-4.

¹⁰²Ibid., pp. 188-189.

¹⁰³Ibid., p. 198.

¹⁰⁴Above, p. 7.

¹⁰⁵Joyce Cary, Herself Surprised (London: Michael Joseph, 1951), Preface, p. 7.

¹⁰⁶Ibid., p. 8.

¹⁰⁷Karl, "Moralist as Novelist," pp. 195-196.

- ¹⁰⁸Joyce Cary, "The Way a Novel Gets Written," Harper's, CC, mcxcvii, 90.
- ¹⁰⁹Ibid., pp. 88-89.
- ¹¹⁰"The Novelist at Work: A Conversation between Joyce Cary and Lord David Cecil," Adam International Review, XVIII, ccxii-ccxiii, 18.
- ¹¹¹See above p. 10.
- ¹¹²Cary, Art and Reality, p. 115.
- ¹¹³Karl, "Moralist as Novelist," p. 193.
- ¹¹⁴Bernard Kalb, Biographical Sketch, Saturday Review, XXXVIII, xxii, 12.
- ¹¹⁵Hazard Adams, "Blake and Gulley Jimson: English Symbolists," Critique, III, i, 13.
- ¹¹⁶Cary, "Way a Novel Gets Written," p. 92.
- ¹¹⁷Cary, Herself Surprised, p. 44.
- ¹¹⁸Above, p. 60.
- ¹¹⁹Joyce Cary, The Horse's Mouth (London: Michael Joseph, 1951), Preface, pp. 7-8.
- ¹²⁰Ibid., p. 7.
- ¹²¹Tauno Mustanoja, writing in his article "Two Painters: Joyce Cary and Gulley Jimson" (Neuphilologische Mitteilungen, LXI, 221-244), sees in Jimson the image of Jimson's father. In his interpretation, Gulley is an impressionist whose technique is outdated and who is unable to express himself in a new manner. Consequently, Jimson is unable to finish any of his pictures. I think that this is a valid interpretation; Mustanoja emphasises one group of occurrences in The Horse's Mouth, while I emphasise another. Neither Mustanoja's interpretation, nor mine conflicts with the notion

of creativity and the eternal creation (that which goes on going on) as worked out in the following pages. However, I see in Gulley's conflict with society a reflection of William Blake, as does Hazard Adams ("Blake and Gulley Jimson: English Symbolists," Critique, III, i.), and feel that Gulley is misunderstood because he is ahead of his times. That is, for his new prophetic vision (as opposed to his new impressionism), Gulley is working out a new technique and not merely refusing to admit that he is outdated.

¹²²Joyce Cary, op. cit. p. 48.

¹²³Ibid., p. 26.

¹²⁴Ibid., p. 149.

¹²⁵Jeanne Garant, "Joyce Cary's Portrait of the Artist," Revue des langues vivantes, No. 6, p. 479.

¹²⁶Cary, op. cit. p. 103.

¹²⁷Ibid., p. 104.

¹²⁸Ibid., p. 297.

¹²⁹Harrison Smith, "Artist of Affirmation," Saturday Review, XXXVIII, xxii, 12-13.

¹³⁰Kalb, Biographical Sketch, p. 12.

¹³¹Cary, Horse's Mouth, p. 119.

¹³²Ibid., p. 99.

¹³³Ibid., p. 281.

¹³⁴Ibid., p. 287.

¹³⁵Ibid., p. 286.

¹³⁶Ibid., p. 285.

- 137 Letter quoted by Andrew Wright in Joyce Cary, p. 112.
- 138 Mark Schorer, "Technique as Discovery," Forms of Modern Fiction, ed. William Van O'Connor (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1948), p. 12.
- 139 For a fuller discussion of this see Ibid., pp. 11-13.
- 140 Cary, Herself Surprised, p. 9.
- 141 Cary, Horse's Mouth, p. 254.
- 142 Ibid., pp. 51-52.
- 143 Ibid., p. 291.
- 144 Joyce Cary, To be a Pilgrim (London: Michael Joseph, 1951), p. 162.
- 145 See above pp. 77-78.
- 146 Cary, Herself Surprised, pp. 149-150.
- 147 Cary, "Way a Novel Gets Written," p. 92.
- 148 Cary, Herself Surprised, p. 220.
- 149 Ibid., p. 189.
- 150 Cary, To be a Pilgrim, Preface, p. 8.
- 151 Ibid., p. 16.
- 152 Idem.
- 153 Ibid., pp. 36-37.
- 154 Ibid., p. 41.
- 155 Ibid., p. 55.

- ¹⁵⁶Ibid., p. 109. The conversion of the chapel into a farmshed is paralleled (see p. 119 below) in the destruction of the Adams room.
- ¹⁵⁷Ibid., p. 78.
- ¹⁵⁸See above, p. 14, on Aissa Saved.
- ¹⁵⁹Cary, op. cit., p. 127.
- ¹⁶⁰Ibid., pp. 135-136.
- ¹⁶¹Ibid., p. 136.
- ¹⁶²Ibid., p. 339.
- ¹⁶³Ibid., p. 333.
- ¹⁶⁴Ibid., pp. 341-342.
- ¹⁶⁵Elizabeth R. Bettman, "Joyce Cary and the Problem of Political Morality," Antioch Review, XVII (1957), 266.
- ¹⁶⁶See above pp. 69-79 et passim.
- ¹⁶⁷Bettman, op. cit., pp. 266-267.
- ¹⁶⁸Joyce Cary, Prisoner of Grace (New York: Harper, 1952), p. 296.
- ¹⁶⁹Ibid., p. 18.
- ¹⁷⁰Ibid., p. 195.
- ¹⁷¹Ibid., p. 298.
- ¹⁷²Ibid., pp. 249-250.
- ¹⁷³Ibid., p. 194.
- ¹⁷⁴Ibid., p. 166.

175 Ibid., p. 195.

176 Ibid., p. 159.

177 Ibid., p. 158.

178 Ibid., p. 170.

179 Ibid., p. 171.

180 Bettman, op. cit., p. 266. I am indebted to Mrs. Bettman throughout.

181 Cary, Art and Reality, p. 21.

182 Joyce Cary, Except the Lord (New York: Harper, 1953), p. 95.

183 Bettman, op. cit., p. 270. (wordly, sic.).

184 Ibid., pp. 270-271.

185 Joyce Cary, Not Honour More (New York: Harper, 1955), pp. 302-303.

186 Ibid., p. 305.

187 Ibid., pp. 5-6.

188 Cary, Art and Reality, p. 38.

189 Cary, Not Honour More, p. 32.

190 Personal letter from Joyce Cary to Elizabeth R. Bettman, December 3, 1956, quoted Bettman, op. cit., p. 272.

191 Wright, Joyce Cary, p. 154.

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